MISS HOGG

THE AMERICAN HEIRESS



V · C JONES

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THE AMERICAN HEIRESS

A NOVEL

BY

V. C. JONES





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MISS HOGG

CHAPTER I.

My story opens in one of the grandest mansions in the west of London. Let us enter the drawing-room and make the acquaintance of this splendidly furnished mansion, with carpets so thick and soft that footsteps cannot be heard on them; the grand, solid, as well as ornamental furniture—couches, easy chairs of crimson brocade, a center table with cover to match chairs, a grand piano of ebony wood, two stools of the same, with crimson brocade and fringe mixed with gold; the mantelpiece covered with rich crimson satin fringed with gold and crimson, and looped up with cord and tassels to match, and two rich vases filled with flowers. A clock of black marble ornaments the mantelpiece. A pier glass almost reaching to the ceiling, and two bronze chandeliers, one at each side, are very effective at night, with the cut glass pendants shining like diamonds. A grand chandelier with red globes and cut glass hangs from the middle of the ceiling. The window curtains are of crimson satin and rich white lace, looped with silken cords and tassels mixed with gold. The room also contains three small tables, a bookcase, a music rack, footstools, two fire screens—one representing a peacock, the other a swan. Four beautiful pictures hung on the walls: the coronation of Queen Victoria, her marriage with Prince Albert, her visit to the Emperor Napoleon in Paris, and the Queen presenting the late Lord Montgomery with the Victoria Cross on his return from the Crimean War. These were all framed in dark wood to match the furniture and grand piano. The portière was of heavy crimson plush with gold fringe.

The fire was burning brightly, for it was winter. A lady raised the portière and entered the room, leading a

little girl by the hand; she looked around as if expecting to find some one there, then crossing the room with a majestic step she seated herself on a couch near the fire, with the child beside her. She was not young; she must have been past forty; tall and dark, with lovely soft black eyes, refined, aristocratic features, a sweet smile on her handsome face. She was dressed in deep mourning. The little girl was about seven years of age, a lovely blonde; golden hair and large blue eyes; a pink and white complexion. She, too, was in mourning, wearing a white dress of finest embroidery, with a black sash and shoulder ribbons, black patent leather shoes with black bows; a black ribbon kept back the curls from her lovely face. Her arms were bare and her dress *décolleté*. She made a very pretty picture.

Having described them, let me introduce them by name to my readers. The lady is Lady Montgomery, the owner of this mansion; she is a widow; has been for some years. She has a son, a captain in the army, though only twenty-one years old. The little girl by her side is her niece, who has just been left an orphan, as the following conversation will show.

Drawing the child affectionately towards her, Lady Montgomery said: "My dear Florence, I hope you will be very happy here with me and your cousin Percival; I will be a mother to you, and if God answers my prayer you will be Percival's wife some day; it was your mother's wish as well as my own." She said this to herself more than to the child, and making her stand before her, she kissed her affectionately and continued: "It is easy to see that blue blood runs in your veins; you are the image of your dear mother, my dear; you look just as she did at your age. Poor Eleonore! But I am making you sad, my love."

"O dear aunty, to think that I shall never see dear mamma again!" and she hid her face on her aunt's shoulder, who allowed her to weep for a few minutes; then, kissing her, she bade her sit beside her and said to her:

"Wipe your eyes, dear, I am going to send for your cousin Percival."

She rang the bell; a neat looking servant, wearing a

white cap and small white apron, in the pockets of which she held her hands, appeared, and waited to receive her orders. Lady Montgomery turning to her said, "Is Captain Montgomery in? If so, let him know that I want to see him as soon as possible."

"Yes, my lady," said Sarah with a curtsy, and left the room.

Lady Montgomery rose, went to a side table, picked up a good sized parcel and came back to her niece. Opening the parcel, she presented her with the contents—a beautiful French doll with a complete *trousseau.*

"O, how lovely!" cried the child, "and how good of you, dear aunty, to have bought it! May I undress it just as I please?"

"Yes, dear, it is yours to do as you wish with, and I know that I can trust you not to break it."

"O, I shall not break it; I love it too much. She has hair just like mine, and blue eyes; yours are black, and your hair is so black and wavy, better than mine."

"O, you little flatterer," laughed Lady Montgomery, and, looking up, she saw her son, who had entered unnoticed, and who hastened to say:

"Good morning, my dear mother, I hope you will forgive me for keeping you waiting. How are you after your journey, and what a pretty fairy you have brought back." Approaching his mother, he kisses her hand, and then addressing his cousin, says, "I don't suppose you remember me, Florence, for it is more than two years since I have seen you; you have grown wonderfully." Seating himself by her side, he made her stand up to have a better view of her, and she looked shyly through her curls, smiled sweetly at him, and said,

"I do remember you, cousin Percival, but you had no mustaches then; I like you better with a mustache."

He laughed merrily, and, bending down, kissed her on the forehead, saying, "Do you know that you are a little flatterer, as I heard my mother say as I entered?" Then turning to his mother, he said, smiling, "She's lovely; it's well, dear mother, that she's still a baby, for were she grown up you would not keep her long."

His mother smiled and thought, "Why, he has fallen in love with her at first sight." But she only said, "Dear

Percival, I sent for you to have a long talk with you on matters of the greatest importance. Kindly ring the bell."

Having complied with his mother's request, he waited uneasily as he thought, "I do hope that my mother has not heard about the colonel, but that is almost impossible. Who could have told her?" So he only said, "I am all attention, dear mother, pray proceed."

The maid appeared, and Lady Montgomery, rising, took Florence by the hand, and leading her to the maid said, "Take Miss De La Rochefoucauld to her nurse." Florence handed her doll to the maid, ran back to kiss her aunt, and, holding out her pretty white hand to her cousin with a smile and a bend of her lovely head, left the room.

"What a grand and lovely woman she will be one day," remarked Percival.

"You are right, my son, and it is about her, and for the purpose of discussing her future and yours also, that I have sent for you this morning. Sit down, Percival, and listen to what I have to say."

The captain took a chair and sitting down facing his mother, who had returned to the couch, he waited, quite at a loss to understand what she could have to discuss concerning the little girl. Had she been a grown up young lady he would have jumped to the conclusion that his mother wished him to marry his cousin; but she was only a baby, as he had previously remarked; so he only said, "I am all attention, dear mother, pray proceed."

"My dear Percival," said his mother, "I am going to explain to you my plans and wishes, which were also those of my late dear sister, your Aunt Eleonore, my favorite sister, who, ten years ago, married Lord De La Rochefoucauld, one of the greatest noblemen in France—blue blood, my dear, as good as ours. Two years ago, as you are aware, since you attended his funeral, he was thrown from his horse and instantly killed, without a last word to his dear wife and child. From that time my sister's health failed, for she loved him more than her own life. It had been a love match. What a grand, noble looking man he was! it seems to me that I can see him now. He was so courteous and refined in all his movements; a little more gushing than we English people are—the French always are. He was a lion among the ladies, and when

he began to pay his addresses to my sister she was envied by all. They were a handsome pair, loved each other devotedly and were proud of each other—he so tall and dark, and she with her golden hair and lovely blue eyes, her head just reaching to his shoulder. O how I do love to remember those happy times! Sometimes I think it cannot be, that it is impossible;" and the countess raised her lace handkerchief to her eyes. "My poor sister, how different was our last meeting!

"Knowing that she was soon to rejoin her beloved husband she sent for me. O, how changed she was!—so thin and pale, and yet she had a bright, hopeful look in her deep blue eyes as she said to me, 'If it were not for my darling Florence I would be glad to go; but you will take care of her and be a mother to her; she will be happier with you and Percival than she could have been with me, for my heart was broken when I lost my beloved husband; he was my joy, my pride, my happiness, my all. Why were we parted? O, my love, my love, I shall soon be with you! I feel that you want me as I want you,' and she buried her face in her pillows and sobbed till her delicate form shook.

"I allowed her to weep for a few minutes, then, taking her thin white hand in mine, and laying my head on her pillow, I said, softly, 'My dear Eleonore, don't you wish to live for little Florence's sake?' She replied: 'No, Laura, no; her life would be too sad with me; she will be better off with you; I give her to you, and if she could only be your daughter one day I should die happy. Promise me that you will do all in your power to unite your son to my daughter. She is young, but so is Percival—only about thirteen years older than she. It is not good for a man to marry young, and my darling is worth waiting for.'

"I promised; I could not refuse her last request, and as far as I am concerned it would give me happiness; so I promised willingly and sincerely, and I had the satisfaction of seeing my dear sister pass away with a smile on her face, holding my hand and that of her child in hers. Her eyes opened and her face looked radiant as she said, trying to sit up, 'I am going; my husband has come for me; I want to go.' And she disengaged her hands from ours and

fell back on her pillows dead. She was so glad to go that after the first shock I could hardly regret her, much as I loved her; her heart was with her husband in heaven.

"Now, Percival, I have told you all that passed between us. What say you, my son? Will you keep your heart free and pure for this pretty child? She will be a great beauty one day, and, as my sister said, well worth waiting for. Her fortune is larger than ours. I only hope that she will love you, for she shall not be forced or coaxed into a marriage in which her heart is not; it must be of her own free will. What say you, my dear Percival? Don't decide at once. Take your time," she added, as she saw a cloud on her son's face.

"My dearest mother, you have taken me by surprise; I was not prepared for this. She is only a child and I am a man nearly twenty-one years old; I should have to wait so long."

"Do you love anyone else?" asked his mother. "I have never seen you pay marked attention to any particular lady of our set."

"No, mother dear, my heart is free."

At this answer his mother's face cleared, and she said, smilingly, "Then keep it so; it is all I ask of you."

The captain's face was still clouded as he thought: "I might wait for my cousin, for I am in no hurry to marry; but I must have money,—I cannot wait so long; and I cannot tell my mother that I have signed that I. O. U. for thirty thousand pounds to oblige the colonel. How was I to know that he was a ruined man? I should have asked my mother's advice; it will break her heart if she finds it out, for she trusts me so completely and hates deceit in anyone, she is so frank and honorable herself."

"Well, my son, have you nothing pleasant to say to me? Will you not try to love your cousin and to think of yourself as an engaged man? It would please me."

"Well, dear mother, do not let us talk any more about it for the present; there is plenty of time. I will do all in my power to please you. Are you going to Lady Joinville's ball to-night?"

"Yes, dear, though I do not care for balls, and having lost my sister only three months ago makes me less inclined to go, though she died in Paris and is almost forgotten

here. Dear Lady Melrose has been taken ill—not dangerously—still, so that she is unable to go, and has sent to ask me if I would chaperon her daughters, and I have not refused. You will be there, of course?"

"Yes, I must go; our colonel will be there, and a lot of us young fellows. It will be a grand affair, I believe. We are to meet an American heiress; it will be fine fun for us, for it is really amusing to hear the American girls ask the gentlemen they dance with if they have a title, and "if not, who has, for I guess I shan't want for an offer from a real lord with all my money;" and the captain laughed merrily, mimicking the nasal accent of the American women.

The countess did not laugh, for she despised vulgarity. She said with dignity, "Now, Percival, please don't repeat to me all the vulgar sayings of those American girls to you gentlemen. I cannot understand how their money can give them the entrance to our circle. I believe that the titled *roués* of our country are accountable for it; they cannot get our daughters, and so marry the daughters of the *parvenus* for their money and introduce them among us, and they, in their turn, invite their friends and relations, so that our circle is no longer select and exclusive as it was, and there is no degree of comfort for us who belong to the oldest aristocracy in England."

"You are right, my dear mother; I understand your feelings and I sympathize with you. It is certainly very humiliating for you to have a person of that kind introduced to you, and have to parry her impertinent questions with a polite nod, a smile, and, when the question is too pointed, a slight elevation of the eyebrows, which, however, sometimes does not suffice, for in their own country they are used to plain speaking; then nothing remains for you but to rise from your seat and say with a smile, 'I hope you will excuse me, I see a friend to whom I wish very much to speak,' and with a slight bow you cross the room and find a seat as far as possible from this inquisitive young lady and her vulgar mamma, and you cannot see any fun in it. But we young fellows pocket our dignity for the time being for the sake of the fun they furnish us, and then as we have no establishments of our own they cannot expect invitations from us, so we keep up the farce

of being appropriated by them just as long as it suits us. But I can assure you that they meet a man more than half way; there 's no shyness on their part. I have actually heard some of them ask a gentleman to take them for a ride in the park, though they had met that night for the first time. Just think of our English ladies making such a request even of an old acquaintance! Why, they would be cut by *all* their acquaintances. But to return to this American heiress. We expect a lot of fun with her; she is one of the brazen sort and has come to conquer a real live lord, and she will not stop at trifles." And Captain Montgomery laughed merrily at the fun he anticipated.

The countess smiled and looked admiringly at her son. He was handsome enough to turn the head of a far better woman than the American heiress, and she hoped that he would never become the prey of such a designing person; she knew that it was dangerous to play with fire, that some of those American girls had good looks, though very little refinement; so she said, "Well, my son, be careful and don't mix with them more than politeness requires."

"All right, mother dear, don't fear for me. I must be going, for I am on duty at the barracks till four, so I will not see you again until we meet at Lady Joinville's ball. Good by." And kissing his mother, he left the room.

CHAPTER II.

THE morning after the ball Lady Montgomery came into the dining room in a rich but plain *négligée,* and, ringing the bell, ordered breakfast to be served. Just as her son came in the countess dismissed the servants, as she wished to be alone with her son.

As soon as they had left the room the captain wished his mother good morning, led her to the table, and, helping her to what he knew she liked best, said to the countess, who had not yet spoken and who looked displeased, "My dear mother, have I offended you? What have I done? Is it about last night's affair?"

"Yes, Percival; I am very much displeased with you. How could you introduce that American girl to me, your mother? You have failed in the respect that you owe me. I could not make a scene; I had to give her my hand when she held out hers to me, and I thought that my arm was coming off; she tore the lace off my sleeve, and I still have a pain in my shoulder. I cannot understand how such people can be tolerated in good society."

"My dear mother, I am really sorry, but I could not help it. Had I not brought her to you she would have come alone, for as soon as the colonel told her that I was Lord Montgomery she never left me a moment, to the great amusement of my brother officers, who encouraged her, and I believe that some one must have pointed you out to her as my mother, for, slapping me on the shoulder, she said, 'Excuse me a moment, Mr. Captain Lord Montgomery, I am going to make your mother's acquaintance;' and she was marching away when I followed her and said, 'Certainly, I will introduce you,' thinking it best to go with her since I could not prevent her coming to you; and you know that I led her away as soon as politeness permitted my doing so. The musicians just beginning a waltz gave me the excuse for inviting her to dance with me. May I never have such a partner again; it is well that I have no corns, for she trod on my feet five or

six times. Her feet are immense; she must wear a number six or seven shoe. She was displeased at having had so little time to talk to you, and I am sorry to have to tell you that she has invited herself here, and most probably will come to-day."

"O, this is all very dreadful," said the countess. "Why did she not take to the colonel or the major? They are handsome men."

"Yes, my dear mother, more so than I am; but you see they are older and not likely to be so easily caught as a young fellow like me. I see no other reason."

"Well, my dear Percival, I hope she will know the customs of society well enough not to call before twelve o'clock."

The countess had barely finished speaking when a loud ringing was heard at the front door, and soon after a voice to match it was heard in the hall saying to the servants, "O, don't trouble to announce me, I am a great friend of Lord Captain Montgomery and his mother, and I guess they have n't forgotten Miss Hogg of Brooklyn, New York; they are expecting me and have everything in apple-pie order in my honor; and I shan't disgrace them. I have been up since five o'clock trying all my dresses on to see which suited best; they are sure to be pleased with me. Don't you think I 'll do?" turning to one of the maids, who wore a more frightened than admiring look.

The footman grinned and told the parlor maid that she had better tell her mistress what grand lady had come to see her.

"O," said Miss Hogg, "just show me the room and I won't trouble anyone to announce me."

The maid had taken the footman's advice and was running upstairs, but Miss Hogg was not far behind; in fact, she arrived at the door as soon as the maid did, and, pushing her aside before she could say a word, advanced into the room, saying, "Good morning, Lord Captain, good morning, ma'am. I see you are at breakfast. Well, I guess I won't bother you to get up to receive me; I 'll take a chair myself and have a bite with you. I took so long to dress and put on all these jewels that I had no time to eat. I was afraid of being late."

The captain had turned pale when he heard Miss Hogg in the hall, and her unceremonious entrance into the room did not add to his composure; he felt it more for his mother's sake than for his own.

Lady Montgomery looked at Miss Hogg in a calm, dignified manner and said very coolly, "Good morning, Miss Hogg. Allow me to ring for a plate. What will you take, tea or coffee?"

"O, I ain't particular; I 'll take some o' these here muffins and a piece o' that there pie; is it pork pie? O, it 's game pie, is it? Well, I guess I 'll like it; also some o' them eggs and bacon. Ham, did you say, Captain Lord Montgomery? Well, I 'll take a couple o' slices—nice and thick, if you don't mind; and I would like some milk in my coffee. Have you no milk in England?"

Lady Montgomery passed her the cream in silence.

Miss Hogg, taking the jug, contemplated the contents in a very doubtful manner and said, "Dear me, this must be custard. Well, I guess it 's the fashion in England. Funny taste these here lords have, but I reckon I shall have to get used to their ways, so here goes." And, taking the jug by the handle, she poured the cream into her tea; but the cream being rather thick it came with a splash which sent her tea like rain all over the table, some of it into her eyes, which she began to rub with her left hand, while the right one was still pouring the cream into her tea, which was overflowing the cup and saucer, and cream and tea ran like a rivulet on the snowy tablecloth among the dishes.

Had the captain been alone he would have had a good laugh, but as it was, he only smiled, while his mother looked ready to faint; still she managed to say, "I hope, Miss Hogg, that you have not injured your eyes."

Miss Hogg removed her hand from her eyes, saw what mischief she had been doing, and exclaimed, "Well, did you ever see such a slob? And all the custard is gone, too."

"Never mind the cream," said the captain, ringing for more, "but I am sorry for you. Is your eye painful?"

"Well, rather, but I guess it will be all right in a jiffy."

The servant appeared and Lady Montgomery ordered

her to bring more cream, which she did, without the slightest look of surprise at the mess on the table.

Miss Hogg changed her seat at the table, getting nearer to the captain. She laughed aloud at the mishap, saying, "Well, after that, I think I 'll wind up with one o' them there glass kittles o' jelly. But you don't eat, either of you; as for me, I have a fine appetite. Why don't you try some o' this here jelly, Captain Lord Montgomery?"—elbowing the captain and laughing at her own joke.

The captain refused politely, pushing back his chair.

Lady Montgomery saw that it was time for her to come to her son's rescue, so she said, "My dear Percival, I will not detain you any longer, and I am sure that Miss Hogg will excuse you when she knows that you are on duty at the barracks to-day, and you will be late if we detain you."

The captain taking the hint, rose, buckled on his sword, and, turning to Miss Hogg, said, with a bow, "I am really sorry, Miss Hogg, to have to leave you, but duty before pleasure." And turning to his mother, he said, "*Au revoir,* my dear mother," bowing respectfully.

He turned to leave the room, but Miss Hogg had no inclination to let him go so easily; she had come to see him, and she would stick to him, as she expressed it. She jumped up in a hurry, upsetting her chair and bringing down her plate, cup, and saucer, having caught her foot in the tablecloth, ran up to him before he had reached the door, and, as her mouth was full of jelly, which prevented her from talking, she caught him by the arm, then having swallowed her jelly in a hurry, managed to say: "Excuse me, Mr. Captain Lord Montgomery, but I had hoped to have a drive with you in Regent's Park. If you think that you 'll come back in time I guess I 'll wait for you. I ain't got nothing to do, you know. I come here right from America to see the real lords and ladies, and I mean to see them. I guess if I stick to you I 'll see all I want; but I ain't going back like a fool for my friends to think that with all my money I could n't dress fine enough to mix with them; I shan't, there now! And you are my friend. I know that you will help me and be proud to be seen with such a finely dressed lady. I shan't disgrace you. I have better dresses than even this here one. Ha, ha, ha!

Don't you think I'll do, Mrs. Montgomery?—I mean, Lady Captain Montgomery—"

But Lady Montgomery did not answer, she felt so shocked at her free way of addressing and detaining her son, who said, with a smile: "I am really sorry, Miss Hogg, but I shall be on duty all day; you have no idea how busy we are, we young fellows. But I have no doubt that I shall have the pleasure of seeing you again before you leave England. Now I must really go; you cannot imagine how very sorry I feel to have to leave your society; it is so agreeable."

"I knew you were a trump," said Miss Hogg, smiling in his face, and shaking his hand most violently, "and if you must go I suppose you must; but I hope it won't be long before you can give up that soldiering."

The captain left the room with a slight flush on his handsome face. He had expected fun, and was really willing to have fun with the American heiress; but he had not expected such an open fire, and to be pressed so closely and vigorously at her first sortie.

When he arrived at the barracks his brother officers joked him about his conquest of the previous night. But when he related what had passed that morning every one laughed so heartily and so long that he thought they would never stop; he himself joined in the laugh more than once; and those who had not yet seen the heiress swore that they would cut him out; they must certainly be introduced to her.

"By Jove!" said Captain Brown, "I must have my share of the fun. How does she look? Is she at all passable?"

"O, yes," said the major, "as far as animal beauty goes."

"What do you mean by animal beauty?" asked Captain Brown.

"I mean that she is well enough physically, but she has no mental refinement, no delicacy of feeling; a gentleman could never be happy with a person of her caliber—always talking of her money. Give me good blood before money. And to think that some of our set marry in those American families—sell themselves, so to speak. A title fetches a good price in America, though they pretend not to care for aristocratic grandeur; it is all sham; they would give their skin to have a handle to their names. I have been

among them and I know their weakness; they are coarse, upstart beggars, and when one of our set is unfortunate enough to be caught by them you may expect a divorce in two or three years at most. They quarrel like barmaids; some of them have actually struck their husbands. Now, we gentlemen can't bear that, you know. I have always said, and I repeat it, let every one marry in his own sphere of life if he wishes to have peace and happiness."

"You are right, major; I agree with you; and I must say that I have seen pretty American girls who seemed well enough behaved and might make a man happy if he could take the girl and leave all her family behind," said an old colonel, who had been in America, and had been feasted but not caught by the title-hunters. "I can assure you," he continued, "it must be most unpleasant for a gentleman when among his friends to feel a heavy hand slapping him on the shoulder, and a coarse voice sounding in his ears, 'Hello, colonel, is that you? I guess you don't know me; I be your wife's uncle, and though not quite so spruce as she is it was us that made the money—her father and me;' and you may turn round to find yourself facing a coarse looking fellow with at least three days' growth of beard on his face and a short pipe in his mouth; a limp collar and a red tie, no gloves, a bright new suit, and unpolished shoes. Just think of such a vision in the midst of your aristocratic friends, and tell me if you can be happy with your American wife. Yet he may be a worthy man, and if he made his money honestly he is to be respected, but he can never be happy nor at his ease with us any more than we can be with him; so I say, with the major, let every one marry in his own sphere. Money makes no difference; it is blood, the race; there is a barrier between the two that can never be passed with impunity on either side. So be careful, Lord Montgomery, how you play with fire, for those Americans are real intriguers, and they spread rumors that they are engaged as soon as a gentleman pays them a mere compliment, thinking that it will advance their cause; the papers take it up and a long paragraph appears saying, 'Another of our American beauties engaged to an English peer. We may in the future have a king in England, a descendant of one of our American girls,' and so on. They imagine that if their name

is coupled with that of a gentleman and mentioned publicly he will not dare draw back. Then comes the vulgar father or brother, bragging of the handsome dowry he intends to give his girl when she marries. If the gentleman is poor he is talked and dragged into matrimony before he has time to reflect; and before the honeymoon is over he awakens to the fact that he has wrecked his life; and though his friends are still pleased to see him they make him feel that his wife is not wanted, and that it is not enough for a man to marry to please himself, but that he must marry to please his friends or he cuts himself loose from them. And the poor, foolish, low-born American girl, instead of having become a lady as she had expected, finds herself snubbed and looked down upon, and if she has the entrance to some good houses it is for her husband's sake and not for her own. She is simply tolerated. She will hear ladies discuss their ancestors, their relatives; she must sit still and listen; she dare not speak of hers; even if they have been good and honest she feels ashamed to claim them.

"So it is no wonder that trouble comes of such unions. And how painful for the parents of such a girl to know that they are looked down upon by the daughter whom they have done so much to raise so far above themselves! Far better for her and them if she had married a policeman and stayed with her people, enjoying their money in their own vulgar way. They would, at least, not look down on each other. So, I repeat, marry in your own sphere. Never make the mistake of marrying above or beneath you, or you will lose all chance of happiness. Now I am done; I will not moralize any more. Don't let yourselves be caught, young fellows. Have fun, but do keep at a distance."

"Well," said Lord Montgomery, "you have certainly given us a long sermon, Colonel Mortimer, and if any of us young fellows are caught you certainly will not be to blame. I wonder how my mother is going to manage to get rid of Miss Hogg."

"My dear boy, don't let that trouble you; Lady Montgomery, with her grand, calm way, will soon make her feel her disapprobation of her conduct towards you, and the consequence will be that Miss Hogg will have to beat a

retreat at a double quick march." At which speech every one laughed.

Lord Montgomery, looking at his watch, said, "I must go to visit the posts; will you come with me, major?"

"With pleasure," answered the major, "we can discuss your late conquest, ha, ha, ha!" and he linked arms with Lord Montgomery. They walked away while the others remained in the mess room playing billiards, discussing the latest news, and planning future pleasures.

CHAPTER III.

After Lord Montgomery's departure Miss Hogg walked back to a seat near Lady Montgomery, who had left the table in disgust after Miss Hogg's last mishap, and was now sitting near one of the jardinières which ornamented the dining room. The servants were clearing the *débris* of the plate, cup, and saucer which Miss Hogg had brought down in her hurry to prevent the captain from leaving her.

Miss Hogg, after having settled herself to her satisfaction, turned towards Lady Montgomery and began, regardless of the presence of the servants: "Mrs.—no, I mean Lady Captain Montgomery, you have a fine young man for your son, but don't you think he is rather cool? I am told that all Englishmen are so. They ain't so in Brooklyn; they 're awfully fresh. Why, my father's coachman tried to make love to me, saying that his dad knew mine when they were boys working at the same jobs; but you bet I sent him to the right-about in a jiffy, and told him that my dad had made a fortune and his dad died a stable boy, and that I would tell my pa about him if he was so sassy again, for, as my ma says, 'Mamie dear, with all your money I guess you shan't marry nothing less than a lord,' and I don't mean to. Don't you think I 'm right? Now, between us, I must tell you that the captain is just the kind of fellow I like. You might give him a hint, you know, for I guess he 's shy on account of my money, and he 's scared that I might refuse him, but I shan't, and I don't care nothing for money; it 's a title I 'm on the lookout for; it sounds so grand to be called my lady, don't you think so? You ain't very rich, are you? I guess you can't be, for your dress is so plain. Just look at me; ain't I smart? Don't you wish you could dress like me? But you shan't want for nothing when I 'm married to the captain."

Lady Montgomery had not answered so far, and Miss Hogg seemed so busy with her plans that the silence had not seemed strange to her.

By this time the servants had put the room in order, and Miss Hogg continued: "I like you because you are so quiet; I guess I could do anything I please with you. Now that we 're alone I 'd just as lief tell you all about my folks and how I come to be an heiress. Of course you 're longing to know, ain't you?" putting her hand on Lady Montgomery's shoulder in a free and easy manner.

Lady Montgomery's face clouded at the insult, and, rising, with a calm, dignified air, she said, with a slight touch of contempt in her voice: "Miss Hogg, I hope you will excuse me; I am very much fatigued this morning, and far from well; I shall have to leave you. I intend shortly to give a party in honor of my niece and I will send you an invitation if you are still in England. I wish you good morning, Miss Hogg," with a slight bow.

But Miss Hogg did not take the hint; she only stared at Lady Montgomery with her mouth half open and answered, "Good morning, ma'am," but never moved an inch, not even understanding that she was dismissed.

Lady Montgomery waited a moment, and seeing that her words had had no effect on the American lady, who only smiled, she continued: "Should you require anything I hope you will ring; I will give orders to the servants. You look fatigued; pray rest yourself; do not hurry. I shall be pleased to hear your family history when I feel equal to the task, but not to-day." And bending her proud head lightly, she sailed out of the room, to the great astonishment and admiration of Miss Hogg—astonishment at being cut short and prevented from relating her family history, and admiration at the grand, noble way in which the countess walked out of the room.

When she recovered from her surprise she exclaimed, "Well, I never! I thought she would be glad to know all about her future daughter-in-law; but, poor thing, if she ain't well, she can't help it. I like her; she looks fine; how she walks! She looks like a queen. How I wish that I could walk like her! But I guess that when I am married to Lord Captain Montgomery I shall feel altogether different from what I do now. But now I must think how to tell her all about my folks, beginning with my grandfather on my father's side.

"Well, my grandfather was a peddler; he was cute, and

as he used to say: 'It takes a sharp one to make a fortune in America, but I calculate I have the stuff in me, for I was never over particular whom I skinned, for you must know that I was raised in the street. I had a father and a mother, but my father went out drinking and my mother out washing, and us young ones were around the street all day long. It 's quite the style in America; it ain't no disgrace. I used to go along with a gang of fellows, all young rogues. I guess I was no worse than they were, only smarter. When the vegetable marketman turned his head I 'd cram my pockets full of whatever came under my hands, and when he turned round all the other boys would halloo "Cheese it," and run away; and I would stand my ground and look at the man so quiet and simple-like, never budging one step, and, pointing to the biggest boy who run the fastest, I would say, half crying, "It ain't me, but that there boy, the big one; his pockets are full of apples and pears." Then the grocer man would cut away after them for all he was worth, while I stayed and grabbed a handful of cash from the till. Then waiting till he came back I 'd halloo to him, "Well, boss, did you catch him? 'Tain't right to be a thief, is it?" "No, my lad, always be a good chap and tell me when you see any of those rogues about my place;" and wiping his hot face on the sleeve of his blouse he would give me a handful of old strawberries, which I would chuck away as soon as I had turned the corner; and, going a roundabout way, I would soon rejoin the other fellows and we would go on a spree with the money—sometimes to the theater or to Coney Island, according to the season. Well, to make a long story short, as I grew up I was just as cute. I went peddling in the big flats, and if the owners happened to be out I grabbed all that came handy. Jewelry I preferred; that 's not stealing. Why should them people have jewelry and not me? To take what we can from people is what you call in America a sharp lad who will be a millionaire some day.' And so my grand dad proved the truth of the old saying, and, as he said, 'Well, I got on amazingly; in a few years I had saved fifty thousand dollars, and now I hardly know what I have.' My grandpa was a smart man and a handsome man. They say I take after him for beauty and cuteness.

"Now for my grandma: I have heard her say she was a baby farmer, as they are called there. She began business in a small cottage, but soon had a large establishment, as she said, by keeping her mouth shut and her eyes open. They were well matched and agreed prime. They never had but one boy—my father. How they managed no one knows but themselves; anyhow, 'tain't none o' my business, so I shan't bother about it. They were a smart and handsome couple and I 'm proud of them.

"On my mother's side I 'm almost ashamed to tell what they were. I 've been told by my father that they were a pair of fools—nothing else. They had a farm in the West and kept cows, horses, pigs and hens, and worked like slaves to bring up their eleven children, who, in their turn, worked and slaved to raise theirs—except my mother, who married my father and was made a lady for life, and ain't got nothing to do but help to spend his money, which he has in plenty, for he has made his share. He took after his father, and was cute, and none of them jimjam fellows. He received an elegant education, and he soon got a tiptop place in a bank and then got to be manager, and he managed so well that the bank failed in less than a year, and he was so disgusted that he said he would never take another position, but live like a gentleman, and he has kept his word ever since, and I calc'late he shan't begin no business now. And my heart! when I bring him Lord Montgomery for a son-in-law he 'll be as proud as a pig with two tails. O, but won't all the Brooklyn girls be mad when they see me marching home with my handsome lord? They 're awfully fresh, the girls in Brooklyn, and I 'll have no end of trouble to keep them away from my husband.

"But surely it must be late. Well, I never! It 's past two o'clock, and the captain has n't yet come back, nor his ma neither. Well, I 'll wait a little longer; but I must have something to eat; I feel weak." She rang the bell violently and a servant appeared. Miss Hogg said in a loud voice: "I want my dinner. Bring me a leg of mutton, some beefsteak and onions, potatoes, cabbage, and a couple of sour pickles—big ones; and for dessert, some Washington pie, a can of lager beer, ice cream, and chewing gum; and be quick about it for I 'm famished. Why do you

stand there with your mouth open like a stuck pig? I guess you ain't used to all them there nice things. Well, maybe you ain't got so much in the house, but bring me whatever you have. Skedaddle, and be back in the twinkling of a bedpost. I 'm near dying with hunger."

The servant, looking puzzled, left the room, and going to the kitchen told the cook what was expected of her for the American lady. The cook grew red in the face with indignation, saying that she was used to cook for the gentry and not for the like of her. The footman and other men servants, as well as the maids, laughed heartily at the *menu* of Miss Hogg's dinner and the anger of the cook.

"Come, cook," said the footman, "you will have to send something up. My lady left orders, you know."

"I suppose I must, but I wonder that my lady did n't show her the door as soon as she came in."

"Well, my lady knows best," said the parlor maid. "She left her in the dining room, thinking that she would soon leave, but it appears that she has made up her mind to wait for Lord Montgomery."

"And I positively know," said the coachman, "that you will have orders from my lady not to admit her again."

"Well, take her that," said the cook to the parlor maid, handing her a tray well laden with a cold fowl, oyster pie, salad, a small white loaf, butter, a strawberry pie, a decanter of port wine, a glass, and a napkin, which the maid took and placed on the table before Miss Hogg, who said:

"Well, I shall be able to make a slight luncheon with them there things. Let me see what it is. O, chicken; I 'll begin with that;" and taking her knife and fork she cut it in half, regardless of the bones. Opening the oyster pie, she smelled it. "O, that 's oyster pie; well, I think I 'll mix a little of this here oyster pie with the chicken. What a funny taste these lords and ladies have! And what 's this here white thing? A handkerchief! Well, I do declare! Do they want to insult me? I 've got one, and much finer, for this is coarse and so large. In America we have handkerchiefs just big enough to hold between our finger and thumb, and it 's an awful business when we have a cold; but I ain't got a cold, so I don't want that there English handkerchief;" and she began to eat, making a

dreadful face at the peculiar taste of the mixture she had made, but she washed it down with several glasses of port wine, which she seemed to relish; and the strawberry pie seemed to be to her taste; having nearly demolished it, as well as the fowl, she exclaimed: "Well, I can't eat no more. I guess they 'll be mad if I don't eat all, so I 'll put the rest of the pie in my pocket and go back to my hotel after I 've had one more glass of wine; it 's better than lager. But dear me, how sleepy I feel! Well, I reckon I 'll just take five winks before I go;" and, resting her head against the back of her chair, she was soon fast asleep and snoring like a trooper.

Two hours passed away; then she began to stretch her arms, which struck the dishes, and she awoke with a start, jumped to her feet, looked at the clock, and exclaimed, "Well, I guess the captain won't come, so I 'll go."

Taking up her hat, which she had thrown on a couch on her entrance, she went to the pier glass, and, having arranged it to her satisfaction, she walked down the grand staircase and told the footman who opened the door for her to tell the captain that she could not wait any longer, but that she would call again, unless he preferred to call at the hotel; and she smiled at the footman and told him that he was a fine fellow.

When the footman repeated this compliment in the kitchen the cook fired up and told him he was a fool, for that she had never seen such an ugly jackanapes as he was, and that the American woman was no lady. Who had ever heard a lady tell a footman that he was handsome? It made her sick, that it did; and she would not work for those upstarts, no, not if they gave her five hundred pounds a year; that she would n't; stamping her foot to emphasize her words.

CHAPTER IV.

Some months have passed; it is spring again; many people are leaving London for their country mansions, Lady Montgomery among the number.

They had just arrived at their beautiful seat in Cumberland. The fresh, pure air of the country was quite refreshing after the London season of balls, paying and receiving visits, shopping and interviewing dressmakers, etc.

Fashionable life is a hard life, and it is envied by so many who only see the bright side of it and imagine that grand people live in idleness and enjoy perfect happiness. How erroneous this idea! Could we read the hearts of those pleasure seekers few of us would change places with them. Worldly pleasure does not fill or satisfy the heart; it leaves a desire for more—a discontentedness. Those who have mingled with them know the bitter that is mixed with the sweet of fashionable life, and how many slights are given in a polite way, by a look, a shake of the head, a smile, even a compliment with a double meaning, which, to a stranger, would seem a mark of respect.

Money is certainly a very useful article, and can give great comfort and do much good when well employed, by a well balanced mind that looks upon it as a trust given by God to use for His glory in doing good to our neighbors. This kind of work, if we really have our heart in it, will effectively bring us peace and true happiness, for the approval or disapproval of the world will not affect us. We are serving God and following our guide, Jesus; we feel that He is pleased with us, and that satisfies us. Our neighbors may smile, or shake their heads, but that cannot change our way of living, nor does it pain or offend us. We know that we are on the right track, and consequently we go peacefully on. Our Guide is safe and true; we trust Him entirely; He is our beacon-light who will guide us safely into port.

So why should we look around us for another guide

who would lead us through the gayeties of the world, trying to imbue us with his pernicious maxims—that we can serve God and the world? It is impracticable. Those who serve the world have no time to serve God, and often forget Him entirely till some great trouble comes upon them. Then it is often too late. So, I repeat, money can do much good, and also great evil. May God help us all to use whatever we have, much or little, so as to please Him and gain for us eternal happiness!

But to return to my story. The beauty of nature has drawn my soul towards heaven. The large park with its woods like a small forest, a deer here and there peeping out and sometimes running across the clearing, then disappearing in another part of the wood; the hares and wild rabbits leaping in the grass, sitting squirrels, their tails reaching far above their heads; and further on, at a distance beyond the park walls, a farmhouse, with the usual surroundings of stablings, hayricks, pigeon coops; and in the fields more than two dozen cows, and some horses, are enjoying themselves, browsing the long thick grass, some lying down ruminating; further on, by themselves, a wall separating them from the cows and horses, are at least two dozen calves of different sizes, running and gamboling to their hearts' content. Some men and women are working in the field. It is a lovely picture, even from a distance.

This farm belonged to Lady Montgomery and provided her with fresh milk, butter, and cheese, vegetables of all kinds, as well as eggs and poultry. The mansion was a large, old fashioned building with diamond-paned windows, large porch, with colored glass, marble floor, grand staircase, at the bottom of which were two marble statues, each holding a chandelier. Marble steps led to the terrace, on each side of which was a splendid marble vase containing flowers beautifully mixed, some hanging almost to the steps. The mansion had square towers with ramparts. The front of the mansion had a balcony reaching from tower to tower, with lovely flowers near each window. The towers were covered with ivy, in which birds made their nests in summer. The garden was well kept and filled with the choicest flowers; a summerhouse here and there, some covered with honeysuckle, others with climbing roses, and

others, again, with clematis. Well kept, white graveled walks led to them among the rose bushes, and ornamental shrubs.

On either side of the avenue leading to the lodge were poplar trees, so tall and noble looking, with their ever-trembling leaves, which sometimes look green and sometimes white, and remind one of the waves of the sea. The lodge was a pretty four-roomed house made to correspond with the square towers, and had diamond-paned windows like the mansion.

John Harrison, with his wife and child, lived in the lodge, and attended the gate, more properly called the great iron door, which had a small wicket that was always opened when the big bell rang, before the iron door was opened—that is to say, in time of war; but at the time of which I write it was open all day, though it was expected that no stranger would pass the lodge without notifying the inmates and stating his business. Mrs. Harrison attended the door while her husband was out, he being gamekeeper. They were a happy couple; they had only one child, a boy five years old. Their home was a picture of neatness and cleanliness, as are the greater number of lodges in England.

Lady Montgomery loved the country far better than she did London. Had she followed her own inclination she would have remained a larger part of the year in Cumberland and at her chateau in Wales than in London; though for her son's sake she went into society; but every year she felt much relieved when the season was over and she could return to her country seat.

Lady Florence was very much pleased. She delighted to go into the park; petted the deer, chased the squirrels, visited the farm on her pony, attended by a servant. She was free and happy, though she missed her cousin Percival, who only visited them at intervals, remaining only a few days, or a week at most; still, she had so many things to attract her attention that she missed him less than she had supposed she would. Then her time was much taken up by her studies. She was a clever, obedient child, and was loved by her governess and by all who had anything to do with her; even the farm hands would look

at her admiringly and say to each other, "Ah, she be a true lady, the little miss; no upstart pride in her."

"Why," said Joe, "she came to see my little lass last week and brought her some cake and fruit, and even shook hands with her at parting, saying that she was so sorry that my little lass was sick, and that she must make haste to get well and they would hunt squirrels together. What do you think of that for a grand lady like her? I am told that she is far better off than my lady; her father was a great lord in France, or somewhere; I have seen him often; he used to come here a-courting Lady Eleonore, our little lady's mother. And to think that they are both gone!"

"Why, Joe, your little lass is better off than Lady Florence," said John, "for she has her father and mother, which is better than all the riches in the world, and our dear little lady has lost hers. She is the image of her mother at her age. I remember her so well. She used to ride a white pony and was kind to every one just as her little daughter is to us now, God bless her!"

"There she is, mounting, now; see her, by the terrace. Why, Lord Montgomery is helping her; he must have returned last night. What a grand looking man he is,—so tall and dark, just like his mother! How noble he looks on his coal-black horse, and what a contrast with his fair-haired cousin! How lovely she is with her black cloth habit, black felt hat with a white feather, and her pretty little white gloved hand, and pearl-handled whip! How well she sits her snow-white pony! What a picture! It is a pity that she is not ten years older, for they would make a fine couple."

"O, don't bother your head match-making," said Joe. "She won't lack offers from the grandest in the land, and as for my lord, he won't wait so long. Did you see him the last time he was here going about with that flashy American girl? Every one do say that he means something, but I don't believe that my lady knows it. But hush! here they come."

And Lord Montgomery and Lady Florence passed them with a kind smile as they raised their hats to the handsome pair, who soon disappeared at full gallop.

Lady Montgomery, from the dining room window, had

witnessed the scene with pleasure and pride. O, if those two could only be united one day her happiness would be complete; but so many years must elapse before that could be, and Percival had looked troubled lately as if he had something of importance on his mind. What could it be at his age? Love, unquestionably. She could come to no other conclusion.

Some of her friends had met the captain in the company of Miss Hogg and had forthwith brought her the news, asking her if she was not afraid that he might be drawn into a marriage with her, but her ladyship had smiled at the absurd idea. Her son to marry a low-born American girl—never! She could trust him. Yet, when her friends had departed doubts and fears would arise. She must speak to him on the subject and warn him before he again left for London. It would be best.

So a few days later, finding herself alone in the drawing-room with her son, she saw her opportunity. He seemed lost in thought and had not said a word for at least half an hour. His mother, looking anxiously at him, said: "My dear Percival, what has come over you lately? You look so sad and unhappy."

The captain had awakened from his revery with a start when his mother spoke, and was looking at her uneasily, and as he did not answer her ladyship continued: "I have been told that you are often seen in company with Miss Hogg; in fact, I saw you myself, yesterday, while riding with Lady Mortimer. You were both sitting in the summerhouse. I was certainly surprised and hurt to see you, my son, in such company. I feared that Lady Mortimer would see you, so to attract her attention I pointed out to her the beautiful scenery on the other side of the avenue. She smiled and reminded me that she had observed the same scenery for the past twenty years and more, and that she could not see any alterations or improvements; and the look she gave me brought a blush to my face, for I felt that I was not acting honestly with my old friend. She seemed to read my thoughts, for she laughed merrily, and tapping me on the arm with her fan, said, 'Never mind, my dear Laura, young people will be young people, and they must amuse themselves; my eyes are not older than yours, and as you were so persistent

in making me look on the left side of the avenue I naturally looked on the right and saw a pretty tableau; but as it seems to be disagreeable to you let us forget it.' And I answered, 'Yes, my dear Maud, forget it; but I, his mother, will ask him to explain.'

"And now I ask you, my son, to tell me what troubles you, for it is obvious to me that you are in trouble. It cannot be that you love Miss Hogg, for she is not only plain, but vulgar; and, as I have often told you, not one of our ancestors has ever made a *mésalliance;* we are true aristocrats and look more to good blood than to fortune."

A thought seemed to flash through Lady Montgomery's mind, and she said, abruptly: "Percival, are you in want of money? Tell me, my boy, my only son, who is to represent our house one day—a name left to us spotless from generation to generation. Do not soil it by a *mésalliance,* break your mother's heart, and wrong a foolish, low-born girl who would be happier with a man of her own class. Or have you forgotten my advice and example—have you been playing or betting—which is it, Percival? Tell your mother and let her save you."

"My dear mother," said the captain, much affected, and rising, taking her hands in his and looking at her tenderly, "let us sit down and I will tell you all. It is not so bad as you have imagined. Had I known the anxiety you were feeling on my account I would have told you before. I have certainly committed a great error and I am very sincerely sorry for it, and I give you my word of honor that I shall never again be caught as I have been with our colonel; it has very nearly wrecked all my future prospects. I am in want of money, but not through gambling or betting, but through having been soft enough to put my name to an I. O. U. for the colonel, who, I have lately heard, is a thorough gambler, and penniless except for his pay, which no one can touch. He is a ruined man, and I shall have to pay the I. O. U. which I was weak enough to sign, and it is a large sum. I hardly dare to tell you. It will be due next month, just on my coming of age. You are sure to despise me for having dared to act without asking your advice and consent. In fact, this affair has troubled me so much that I had almost made up my mind to propose to Miss Hogg to enable me to pay

it. I now despise myself for the very thought; it is unworthy of a true gentleman. I read your indignation and the pain that I am causing you in your face; still, I wish you to know me just as I am, and how one wrong committed to oblige a friend has very nearly led me into another which would have been irreparable. But for your kind words and your great anxiety on my account, which has led me to confess everything to you, my dear mother, God only knows how far I should have gone."

"But, my dear Percival, the sum must be very large; you frighten me; do tell me the amount."

"Thirty thousand pounds, dear mother," answered the captain, looking hard at the carpet and blushing painfully, not daring to look at his mother, who remained silent for a moment; then placing her hand on his shoulder, she said:

"My dear boy, this is very terrible. Still, I had feared that it was worse, as you spoke of selling yourself to pay the debt. Did you think of me whose only son you are? In wrecking your own life you would also have ruined mine, and also your cousin's prospects. I am so pleased that you have opened your heart to me." And, rising, she went to her desk, wrote a check for the amount, and, presenting it to her son, said, "Here is a check for thirty thousand pounds, and though it is a very large sum to lose, even for us, still, I am happy to say that it will not put us to any great inconvenience, for, as you are aware, my income in my own right is large, and I spend but little."

The captain took the check and kissed his mother's hand with gratitude, saying: "It will never happen again, dear mother; forgive me, and in the future I shall always ask your advice, and I will try not to disappoint you in my marriage. I shall wait for my dear little cousin. I love her already, and if she will love me I shall only be too happy to make her Lady Montgomery, and you the dowager Lady Montgomery. Just think how it sounds!" laughing merrily, for he had quite recovered and felt free and happy once more. The reaction was great.

His mother smiled kindly at him, for although he had lost thirty thousand pounds he had not done it in a dishonorable manner; his kind heart had prompted him

to do it—not vice—and his mother forgave him freely. His keeping up the acquaintance of Miss Hogg weighed more on her mind, and she said, "I am so pleased to see you happy once more, and so well disposed towards your cousin; but allow me to remark that you are not paying her a very great compliment by flirting with Miss Hogg. How came she to be in our summerhouse with you yesterday? She has never been invited here by me, and surely you have not invited her yourself, even for the love of mischief; nor would any young lady accept the invitation of a gentleman; it would be highly improper."

"Nay, my dear mother, I would never so far forget the respect due to you as to invite anyone who I knew would not be agreeable to you; nor would I think of inviting a lady. I certainly deserve your bad opinion for having been seen with Miss Hogg, but I am not so much to blame as you suppose. I certainly thought of proposing to her, as I have confessed to you, but it was only a flash; in less than a minute I felt ashamed of the thought, and I will explain what passed between us yesterday.

"In the first place, she came without any invitation from anyone. I was at the lodge talking to Harrison about some poachers who are destroying the game, when a carriage came to a full stop at the gate, and a lady jumped out without the least ceremony or aid, and ran towards me, holding out both hands, and saying at the top of her voice, 'O, my lord captain, is that you? I 'm powerful glad to see you; how do? Well, I guess I 'm in luck; I 've got heaps to say to you.'

"Well, dear mother, I was puzzled how to act. I took off my hat and bowed very low, keeping the hat in my right hand and the walking stick in the other, so as not to be compelled to take her extended hands, saying at the same time, 'Good afternoon, Miss Hogg, I hope I see you well.' 'O, I 'm pretty bouncing, thank you. I see that your hands are full, so I 'll take your arm;' and, suiting the action to the word, she took my left arm and marched me towards the house, calling over her shoulder to the cabman, 'You wait there, you fellow, till I come back, or I won't pay you a cent.'

"Harrison and his wife looked thunderstruck, and I, not knowing exactly what to do, walked by her side in

silence, not daring to refuse for fear of a scene, and yet not daring to walk to the house with Miss Hogg on my arm. Had I been an older man I might have found a way out of the dilemma, but I was dazed. To add to the trouble, as we neared the house I saw Lady Mortimer's carriage at the door; and, worse than all, the hall door was opened, and you and her ladyship came down the steps. I was ready to drop. What would you and Lady Mortimer think of me marching in with a lady, and such a lady, too, on my arm, and her servants, as well as ours, looking on? I looked around in desperation; we were just passing the summerhouse with climbing roses, and, turning to my companion, I asked her, with an emotion which I believe she attributed to a cause far different from the real one, 'Do you love roses, Miss Hogg? See, there are some very beautiful ones.' 'Sure I do,' she answered, falling into the trap, 'let us go and gather some for your buttonhole;' and, to my great relief, she dragged me after her till we reached the summerhouse. I sat down on one of the seats exhausted, while she plucked a full blown rose as large as a dinner plate for my buttonhole, and at least a dozen for herself. Then, seating herself by my side, she was just pinning the rose in my coat when Lady Mortimer's carriage passed us. I felt hot all over as I saw your eyes turned upon us, and Lady Mortimer looking at us with a wicked smile which said, 'O, I see you; I've caught you young people.'

"I was so excited that I did n't take off my hat, but looked down, tapping my boots with my cane. Miss Hogg, misinterpreting my emotion, said, tapping me on the shoulder, 'Why, you are blushing like a girl; you are so different to the New York and Brooklyn boys; they 're awfully fresh; they could n't blush if they tried; I suppose if they were lords they would blush too, but you see they ain't. The richest of them were only peddlers, bootblacks, and saloon keepers, or their fathers before them were, so that the blush has been well taken out of them. And they are so sassy, too; they never take off their hats to anyone, young or old; I think they must have been born with their hats on. And as for giving up their seats in the cars, it is quite out of the question; us females could drop to the floor, and they would still keep their seats

with their noses well stuck in their newspapers, pretending not to see us. There are some exceptions, but very few. Some say, when they see a man get up and give his seat to a woman, that he must have English blood, or be a stranger, but when he has been in America awhile he will be cured of that nonsense. Every man for himself in America.

"'So that is why I have come to England. I want to marry a gentleman. It's nice to see them take off their hats, even to their mothers, and to kiss their hands to them. Why, in America, a fellow thinks nothing of throwing his arm around a girl's neck and giving her a kiss without saying "by your leave." You are so very indifferent; here I have been with you ever so long and you have not even paid me a compliment or tried to kiss my hand; you are awfully cool.'

"I felt annoyed, and yet amused, but I managed to say, 'My dear Miss Hogg, I would never dare to take such a liberty with you; and I am sorry to say that I shall not be able to invite you to the house, for Lady Montgomery is out—has gone with Lady Mortimer. See their carriage just turning to the lodge; they are going to the farm.'

"'Well, I never!' she replied. 'Why didn't you tell me before? I might have gone with them, and you, too, of course. Suppose you whistle to them; they might hear you and stop, you know; try, before they're out of sight; do, there's a peach.'"

"How very vulgar," said her ladyship; "and did she give you a peach to tempt you to whistle, just as if you had been a little boy?"

"O, no," answered the captain, with a smile which he could not restrain; "it was I who was the peach; you have no idea of all the slang she uses. I am at a loss sometimes to comprehend her meaning."

"Really, Percival, it would be laughable if you were not mixed up in it," said the countess, with a smile. "Did she complain to you that she had not been invited to Florence's party? I left her out so that she might understand that we had no desire for her company. If she were of our set she would never overlook the slight."

"O, she did, and she said it must have been my fault, for that you and she agreed prime—those were her words. I hope you will excuse me for making use of them. And

she also flew into a terrible passion when I did not obey her command to whistle after you and Lady Mortimer, and turned upon me, saying: 'I really believe you are ashamed of me, Mr. Captain, and you did n't want me to go with your mother. You may smile, but I think it is most unkind of you to treat me so after the conversation I had with your mother. I am as good as engaged to you; with your mother's consent, too.'

"I jumped as if I had been shot. 'What, Miss Hogg, you engaged to me without my knowledge! Surely you are joking; you Americans have no limit to your jokes; you are all so clever that we find ourselves bought, sold, and delivered before we have the slightest suspicion of what is going on. Still, I must say that I object to being disposed of in so unceremonious a manner, though I feel greatly the honor that you would confer upon me, even in a joke, for I am not so vain as to believe that you are in earnest.

"'But suppose I was in earnest?' she said, with a laugh that sent a cold chill through my whole body. I replied, 'I will not suppose for a moment that a lady would say what you have just said, except as a joke; pray say no more about it. How do you like England and when do you expect to return to your own country?'

"'O, it will all depend; I am in no hurry. I like England a sight better than I do France, for they talk like pigs there, and they are forever grinning, and they call us *la belle American.* My heart! to call us a bell! I suppose it 's because we talk loud and are lively—they say noisy—that they compare us to church bells, or perhaps to the crier bell—they did n't say which—but I made them understand that I was not a bell, though I choose to talk loud. Some of the ladies smiled, and one gentleman took off his hat, and, bowing to me, said something I understood to be "the damzelle is reasonable; she is no bell;" so you see he took my part, and I liked him for it, and smiled at him; but I guess his wife must have been near about for he never answered my smile, and me and ma turned away in disgust.'" And the captain laughed merrily and continued:

"While she was relating this interesting anecdote she had been busy making a bouquet with the dozen full blown

roses; when that was done she placed it in her belt; it almost reached her chin. I asked her if it was the fashion in America to wear large bouquets. 'O, sure it is; we ain't mean; we want plenty of everything. Here you see a lady with five or six lilies at most, pinned on her shoulder, in a green leaf. We could n't stand that, you know; we like a good show.' "

"Really," said her ladyship, "you have been edified and have gained knowledge of the new world. How did you manage to get rid of your interesting companion? I had no idea that her mother had accompanied her to England. And how very absurd that the French speak like pigs, because she does n't understand them. Did she expect them to speak English? The French are the *crème de la crème* of refinement and courtesy."

"Certainly, my dear mother, but you forget that you have been very differently treated by them to what Miss Hogg and her mother must have been—always doing something *outré,* which shocked and disgusted some, while it amused others who did not take it so seriously—men in particular. Americans are so free; so very different from us English.

"You will be surprised when I tell you that Miss Hogg said it made no difference whether you were at home or not, that she did n't mind in the least; that she had often been to a restaurant with her escort and had a jolly supper on leaving the theater, and no one ever found fault; it was quite the fashion in New York.

"I tried to explain that every country has different customs, and that we had to follow the rules of society if we wished to be respected, however strongly our inclination pointed the other way. 'O, my heart!' she exclaimed, 'did you ever hear such rubbish? I believe in people enjoying themselves if they have money, as I have, and can dress as I do. What do you say, lord captain? I know you don't belong to that silly set, and you like me, don't you know? You know you do'—giving me a poke in the ribs that brought tears to my eyes—and she laughed loud enough to be heard at the lodge."

"My dear boy, how could you put up with so much impertinence?"

"I can assure you that it was not willingly, but some-

how I did not seem to find the right thing to say. I am never at a loss to give and take a joke in our own set, but I felt nonplused with Miss Hogg; in fact, looked timid, and felt so; and, though I wished myself miles away from her, I was at a loss how to take the first step.

"At last I remarked that it was getting late and that you would not be back in time to receive her; that I was sorry she had come so far to see you and had been disappointed, that her coachman might get tired of waiting and go away, and it would be very unpleasant. 'Shall I see you to your carriage, Miss Hogg?' and I rose and walked out of the summerhouse and came face to face with the major, who had a wicked twinkle in his eye. Raising his hat to us and making an absurd bow, he said, 'O, my dear boy, have I come at a *mal-à-propos* time? Am I *de trop?*'

"I could have knocked him down, and yet I was pleased that he had come to break our *tête à tête.* Miss Hogg jumped up, shook hands with him and laughed at his joke. I remarked that I was just going to take Miss Hogg to her carriage and that we would be pleased to have his company; so we all walked toward the lodge, the major joking me and getting me deeper with Miss Hogg. But I paid him off. He laughs well who laughs last. I opened the carriage door for Miss Hogg and told her how sorry I felt that I could not escort her, as you would be expecting me to dinner, but that the major would be delighted to see her home. He looked daggers at me, but he did not dare refuse; so I bundled him in with Miss Hogg, and said, 'I really envy you, my dear fellow.' 'And well you may,' he answered; and Miss Hogg, taking it as a compliment, laughed aloud. I raised my hat and laughed heartily at the trick I had played the major. I shall have to pay for it sooner or later, but I will trust to luck to get even with him."

"Well, really, you young fellows seem to have a good time, even if you do get into trouble sometimes," said her ladyship. "Still, a young head is apt to go too far in these matters and find it difficult to draw back with honor. Do you think that Miss Hogg is likely to trouble us again? for, of course, she must see that her visits are not agreeable to us. I cannot understand her motives in asserting that I

have discussed your matrimonial prospects with her. When she was here last she spoke very freely of you and your appearance, and would have told me a great deal about herself and people, but I left the room, and never even inquired of the servants how long she had stayed after my departure."

"I cannot understand her myself, unless it is some of her low jokes, but I am sorry to have to tell you that she is determined to come to see you and bring her mother with her.'

"May we be preserved from such a misfortune!" cried Lady Montgomery. "I have a mind to say 'not at home.' "

"Too late, my dear mother; I hear her voice."

And, in fact, a loud altercation was heard in the hall between Miss Hogg and the footman, who had said, "I will inquire if my lady is at home."

"You old humbug, did n't I see her at the window as I came down the avenue? What do you mean by trying to bamboozle me?"

"I mean, madam," said the footman, "that I will inquire if my lady can see you."

"Of course she can; I guess you don't know that it won't be long before I marry Lord Captain Montgomery; I bet you don't know nothing. Let me pass. I don't want none o' your announcements; I can find my way."

And pushing the man to one side, she marched up the stairs, followed by her mother, who was saying rather timidly, "Mamie, I would n't go up if I was you; if we 're not welcome, let 's go."

"How you do talk, mother! have n't I told you that I 'm as good as engaged to the captain? It 's only that jackanapes of a footman who wants to give himself airs. I 'll have him discharged as soon as I 'm mistress here. Come along, ma."

"No, Mamie, dear, I 'll stay here while you go and see Lady Montgomery; I 'd rather;" and she went back and sat down on one of the hall chairs.

Meanwhile her daughter went up, saying to her, "You have no spirit, that you have n't, no more than a fly; if dad was here he 'd be after me in a jiffy, and back me, too, you bet;" and she walked into the drawing-room much excited.

"Good morning, Mrs. Montgomery—no, not that either. That beggarly footman of yours has made me so mad that I don't know whether I stand on my head or my heels—I mean Mrs. Captain—O, bother the name! it won't come right; yes, it must; I 'll have to get used to it as it will soon be mine, I guess. Lady Montgomery—that 's it, at last,"—having pronounced it very slowly. "Now ain't it true that me and you agreed that I should marry the captain, and that I was to give you lots of money to dress as smart as I do? You are so sweet looking that I know it ain't your fault. Do tell the captain, there 's a dear," and she approached her ladyship as if she would embrace her.

But Lady Montgomery drew back and said in a calm, low voice, "My dear Miss Hogg, pray do not excite yourself; be calm; take a chair and rest yourself while I explain matters to you; it is all a mistake on your part.

"Lord Montgomery, my son, is already engaged to his cousin, Lady Florence De La Rochefoucauld, and he cannot marry you or any other lady; and allow me to tell you—and I beg of you not to be offended at what I am about to say, for I really mean it for your happiness—were you to marry my son you would not find happiness with him; a title is not enough to bring happiness; you would soon tire of it. I have no wish to pain you; kindly keep this in mind; it is for your good that I am speaking. You would often be slighted by his relatives and acquaintances, and made miserable by remarks at your expense that he would be powerless to prevent, and he would soon be made to understand that it is not enough to please himself in the matter of marriage, but that he must consider his social position; that money alone, without birth, does not outweigh prejudice in our set; blue blood is necessary and indispensable; true happiness can only be found with our equals, and it is the same in every station in life.

"Take my advice, my dear girl; marry some good man in your own sphere of life, use your money in doing good, and you will find true happiness. Many of your countrywomen have tried to marry above their station, and I am sorry to say that some have succeeded; but at what a cost to themselves, and to their high-born, but socially ruined, husbands! What heartaches on both sides! If received

in society to hear whispered here and there, 'That's Lord So and so, the old *roué,* the gambler; he sold his title to that American girl; her father is a millionaire, and he had to pay a good price for it. The old fellow began life as a peddler. The girl has cut loose from her family, of course; she, herself, was enough for her husband, without her family. It is said that the old people are breaking their hearts over it; they expected to have the *entrée* to my lord's house; the girl is ashamed of her parents and does not wish to have them near her. She often quarrels with her servants, and when her husband remonstrates with her she turns on him. They lead a cat and dog life; they will soon be seeking a divorce.' I have often heard such remarks made, and I have pitied them both. How much they have suffered! And the girls' parents who had worked so hard to raise their children so far above themselves, expecting joy and gratitude for what they had done, instead of which they are looked down upon and forsaken by them. Their money is what is needed, not their presence. O, how bitter it must be for those low-born, but good and hard-working kind parents! How much better it would have been had their daughter married a policeman, or a shopkeeper, or any other man in her own station! Don't you think so, Miss Hogg? You would not wish to break your parents' hearts, would you? Don't get angry, my dear, but just reflect and you will own that I am right."

CHAPTER V.

LADY MONTGOMERY was a thorough aristocrat, with all the pride of her race. She was proud, but not arrogant; she had no wish to humble those who had been born in a lower sphere than her own, but she did not believe in equality, nor did she approve of mixing the different grades of society. She was kind to every one, as a true-born lady and a Christian should be, and in speaking as she had done to Miss Hogg she had meant to set her right for her own welfare. Had she been an upstart, vindictive person she would not have argued the point, but would simply have given positive orders to her servants not to admit Miss Hogg. Her kind heart had forbidden that; still, there must be an end. Miss Hogg must be made to understand that it is not the custom in England for young ladies to propose, or even to hint to gentlemen that they are willing to meet them half way. They must remain passive.

Miss Hogg would do all the work and all the courting. She imagined that her money gave her the right of entrance everywhere; she thought that fine clothes made her a lady, and that if she did not receive offers of marriage right and left it was only timidity on the part of the gentlemen, who feared a refusal on account of her large fortune; so that when she heard Lady Montgomery's version she was at first dumfounded; she would not believe her own ears. Then, as she began to comprehend that Lady Montgomery looked down upon her and would be ashamed to claim her as her daughter-in-law, and advised her to marry a low man, her anger knew no bounds; her face grew red with passion; she clinched her fists, and rising, she went a step nearer to Lady Montgomery, as if to strike her. The captain had advanced a few steps towards his mother, but she had signaled to him to stop, and, looking calmly and proudly at Miss Hogg, she waited. Miss Hogg, meeting that look, quailed under it, and remained where she stood, not daring to advance another

step; but her anger found vent in words; her true nature came out; all the varnish of politeness vanished in a moment. Had she been a lady born she would have walked out of the room as proudly as a queen, and would not even have deigned an answer.

But Miss Hogg found relief in abuse; so, stamping her foot, she screamed, "Well, I never! You must have changed your mind pretty quick. You must have had a fortune left you since I was here, I guess, or you would n't be such a beggar on horseback as to tell me to marry a zephyr alive—I reckon I could n't marry him if he was dead—whatever the fellow may be; and as for your son marrying Florence De La Rochefoucauld, he never shall. I will be revenged on you both. . The idea! I am not good enough for that beggarly son of yours. Why, I could buy you both twice over with all my money. See my jewels; just what I have on cost more than fifty thousand dollars. What do you say to that? You never saw as much money altogether, I bet." And looking from mother to son to see what impression she was making, she met the smiling face of Lord Montgomery, who felt quite amused to hear her brag of her money—he who at that moment had one hundred and fifty thousand dollars in his pocket to throw away on that worthless colonel's I. O. U. She saw him smile and her heart softened towards him; advancing a step nearer to him she exclaimed: "O, captain, won't you think better of it? I 'd give all my money to be Lady Montgomery."

The captain turned away from her in disgust and walked to the window; but Miss Hogg's blood was up. He looked so handsome standing there so proud and erect, curling his black mustache. She had never seen anyone like him in America—had never imagined that such perfect manhood existed; and now the thought of losing him maddened her. She rushed towards him, and in her madness would have thrown her arms around his neck; but Lady Montgomery, guessing her intention, rose in time to place herself between her and her son, and motioning her back, said, very coolly:

"Miss Hogg, I am expecting visitors, so that I shall have to wish you good morning. I hope you will have a pleasant journey back to America."

She rang the bell. Sarah appeared. "Open the door for Miss Hogg, and tell Lady Vincent to come up; it was her carriage that I heard just now, was it not?"

"Yes, my lady."

Miss Hogg was so taken by surprise that she left the room, only murmuring: "I will be revenged if I die for it. O, my heart! but you will both pay dearly for this; and that Florence too"—and she marched down the stairs and said: "Come, ma, let's go; if you had come up with me all this would not have happened. O why was n't I born a lady!"

And as she passed out she saw, or thought she saw, a smile on the face of the well trained footman, and she boxed his ears soundly. It made him wink, and brought a flush of anger to his face. For his mistress's sake he said nothing, but he drew himself up more erect, and really did smile as he saw her trip on her skirt while stepping into her carriage; and, turning to one of the maids, said, "Did you ever see a real lady get into a carriage like this American woman? It is easy to see that she was n't born to it."

"No, John, I never did; but I am sorry that she gave you such a box; why, your cheek is swelling already."

"Yes, it is painful; she has a hand as heavy as a navvy."

Sarah's eyes filled with tears of pity, and John looked at her with surprise. Said he: "Why, are you so sorry as all that? I thought you hated me."

"O, no, I don't, John;" and she ran away.

"Well," thought John, "women are queer things. There's that Miss Hogg after my lord like fire; anyone can see that; and there's Sarah, who always said she could n't bear me, and when I 'm hurt she has tears in her eyes, and more than tears, if I 'm not mistaken. I hope it is so, for I have a weakness for her; she 's a good, decent girl, and perhaps—who knows?—she may be my wife one day. But how I do run ahead, to be sure! How my cheek do smart and how swollen it is getting!"—as he looked at himself in a pocket mirror—"If Miss Hogg comes here often I shall have to get a leather patch to put on my cheek or the visitors will think that I always have the toothache."

CHAPTER VI.

MEANWHILE Miss Hogg and her mother had driven away. The mother looked timidly at the daughter and asked, "What is the matter with you, Mamie, and what did you box that poor man's ears for? He did nothing to you that I saw."

"O, indeed, you never see nothing; now dad would have seen through it in a jiffy. Well, the trouble is this," pointing to a little girl with golden curls down to her waist, and mounted on a white pony, followed by a servant in dark green livery.

"O, what a lovely child, Mamie! I never saw such a beauty; she 's all lilies, roses, and gold. Such a complexion! Such hair! We never see that in America."

"O, do leave off, ma; you 'll drive me mad with all that trash! Do you really think this little girl so beautiful?"

"Why, of course I do; you must be blind if you don't; she 's a perfect vision from heaven; an angel could n't beat her; who is she, do you know her?"

"Of course I do, and I hate her. She it is who stands in my way of being Lady Montgomery; would you believe it—that chick?"

"I don't understand, my dear, and there 's no asking you a question lately; when I do you get in such a rage that you upset me for the day; just like bringing me here to-day; making me believe we would be welcome; and I see you force your way upstairs. Yes, you did; you need n't stare at me with flashing eyes; you did, by main force; and I felt so small sitting there in the hall, with the servants each passing in turn to have a look at me, and my daughter upstairs with the countess. If you had been welcome a message would have been sent for me to come up, but none came. I may not be a lady, but I have feelings and judgment enough to know when I am not wanted. You don't take after me, my dear, but after your father. I 've seen him force his way as you did

to-day, regardless of insults, if he thought money was to be made by it."

"Well, ma, ain't you glad that he made money?"

"Yes, my dear; but people can be very comfortable and happy with less money than we have. It has often made my heart ache the way your father has been spoken to by people of very doubtful character. Your father has always been good to me and given me as much money as I wished to spend, but he has never taken me into his confidence as regards his business. When I have sometimes asked him his answer has been that it would never do, for if he did I would soon ruin him with my silly scruples about what was right and what was wrong, and that some women could never understand what business was. As for him, he thought might was right. It was him first put it into your head to marry a lord, and I, like a fool, fell into the trap, for, of course, I would have been very much pleased to have you marry a gentleman, but I had no idea that you would have to run after them; I thought your money would be attraction enough; and you are not bad looking, my dear, even if I do say so," said the poor, loving mother, looking at her daughter with a fondness that disarmed her.

Her daughter said: "I 'm a brute, ma, to be cross with you; we 're so different that you can't understand me; my dad does—he 's so cute. What did you do with yourself yesterday, ma? Did you stay in the hotel all day?"

"No, my dear, I made the acquaintance of an old housekeeper who is staying at the hotel and we went out together and visited a hospital where she has a niece; then we went to a home for poor little children; some are orphans and some are foundlings. I saw many pretty children, and do you know, Mamie, what came into my head while there?"

"I can't never guess, ma, for you have such strange notions!"

"Well, Mamie, it 's this: that if you were to get married, as you led me to believe that it was almost settled, I would take back with me one of those pretty little girls to keep me company, for I shall feel lonely, my dear, when you are gone;" and tears filled her eyes.

Miss Hogg had listened to her mother with great interest, and at the reference to taking a little girl back with her a light came into her eyes; she smiled and said, "That 's just it; I 'll do it."

"What will you do, Mamie, get married? Is there any hopes, do you think?"

"Of course there is, my dear mother, even if I don't marry Lord Montgomery. There 's as good fish in the sea as ever was caught, but I was n't thinking of myself, but of your plan about a little girl. I approve mightily of it, and if you like we 'll go to-morrow and choose one in a jiffy."

"Do you really mean it, Mamie? I 'm so glad, my dear, I was afraid you would n't be pleased with me and would perhaps laugh at my strange notions."

"No, ma, nothing could please me better. But here we are at the station, and I hear the whistle of the train, so let 's hurry or we 'll miss it;" and they dismissed the cab and were just in time for the train that came steaming in for London.

They had return tickets so they got aboard without delay, and it happened that the carriage had no other occupant, so that they were able to discuss their plans, at least till they reached the next station, without interruption. Miss Hogg led off, so to say, and managed her mother, who became like clay in her daughter's hands. She would use her mother's plan to work a terrible vengeance on Lady Montgomery and her son; so she approved and praised her mother's intention. The mother was in her glory, for she had feared the opposition of her daughter.

"Will you really go with me to-morrow, Mamie dear, and shall we take the housekeeper with us?"

"Well, no, ma, I think not; we don't want everybody to know, do we? It would n't be nice for the dear little thing to have every one know that she comes from the poor-house."

"You 're right, Mamie, and wiser than I am; but how shall we manage?"

"There 's a lot of Americans at the hotel; they 'll be sure to see her and to ask who she is, and, of course, will guess by her appearance, for those children have a certain look that can't be mistaken. If you leave it to

me, ma, I 'll arrange it so that no one will find out. What we have to do first is to choose the child; she must not be too young, for it would give you too much care—say seven or eight years old; she will be just of a nice age to dress up and take out with you without having a nurse always at your heels."

"That 's just my idea, Mamie. If we can only succeed in hiding where she came from it will be so nice; but how do you propose to do it?"

"Well, first of all, don't mention to anybody that you intend to adopt a child; mind, no one must know; not even the old housekeeper; and, above all, don't tell any of our Americans at the hotel; mind, not a word. I will take furnished rooms at some distance from the hotel—say at Richmond—where we can take the child and have her dressed and attended to in a proper manner. I 'll have to take my maid into my confidence, but she won't talk; she 's as mum as the dead, and will enjoy the trick immensely, and she knows which side her bread 's buttered on."

"But, my dear Mamie, there 's no trick. This affair concerns us and no one else; it 's for the child's sake; it will hurt no one."

"Of course not, ma; it 's only a way I have of talking;" and she thought to herself: "What a fool I am! I betray myself at the very beginning. If ma was n't so soft she 'd guess that I 'm making a tool of her. Poor ma! She 's awful good, though she 's so simple."

The old lady was delighted and wished that to-morrow had already come. When the train ran into the station a cab was hired to take them to Temperance Hotel, Southampton Road, West. When they entered, Miss Hogg was so happy looking that some of her friends asked where she had been, and said that she must have had a good time.

"Yes," replied Miss Hogg, before her mother could answer, "we have been on a visit to Lady Montgomery in Cumberland, and we have had a jolly time. It is a grand place, not barren and wild looking, like our American mansions—but I can't talk about it to-night; I 'm too tired. We will have our dinner sent up, eh, ma, instead of coming down to the *table d'hôte?* Come, waiter," she called out as one passed the door, "let our dinner be served

in a jiffy, and mind that it be something good, and plenty of it."

"O, is that you, Miss Nelly?" as a young girl came into the dining room. She was plainly dressed and might easily have been taken for a chambermaid, yet she was the owner's daughter, who superintended part of the establishment, which was large—three houses having been turned, so to speak, into one. I, the writer, lost myself in it once, and had to ask the way to my room. I found that I had gone into the third house instead of the first; they are just alike, and are reached by long corridors.

Miss Nelly is a nice girl who works hard for temperance, not only in her father's hotel, but outside of it, and sometimes sends around little books with the names of subscribers for the good work, and the amount given by each. She can't be young at the present time—1898—for in October, 1884, she was about twenty, if not more.

Well, to return to Miss Hogg. "I 'm so tired, Miss Nelly; when you see my maid will you tell her that I want her to come to me in double quick time? Don't forget."

"No, Miss Hogg," replied Nelly, with an amused smile, for she knew when she had to do with a lady, and all Miss Hogg's fine clothes could n't make her one in Nelly's eyes.

After supper Mrs. Hogg retired, and Miss Hogg had a long conference with her maid, Katy, who at first refused to have anything to do with the matter. She said she was afraid she would never have the courage to do what was asked of her.

"All bosh," replied Miss Hogg; "you are a dare-devil, and would dare anything if you only have a mind to. I know you of old; many a trick have you played me when we were at school. O, but those public schools are stunners! Rich and poor all mixed together like a drove of Irish pigs. And what fights and hair-pullings we did have! You and I beat all the other girls flat. Mr. Handywork used to call us the terrors of the school. Do you remember the day I put some sand into his hat, and when he put it on it got into his eyes and he could n't see to run after the boys who were laughing at him? He called for water and you ran for some and put the wash basin on the chair on which he was about to sit, so that the poor

master had a cold bath. Then we all ran away laughing, though he was swearing vengeance on us for the next day; but we only laughed the more, for we knew he did n't know who had done it. In fact, it was your pluck, Katy, that made me choose you for my maid, and if you are going to draw back now I shall look for some one else; and perhaps it would be better if I employed a man. So you get to bed; I don't want you; do you hear? Get out or I 'll throw my boot at you."

"Don't be angry, Mamie! I 'll do what you want me to; sure and faith I will."

"Well, did you ever? If you ain't an Irish pig. When you 're driven one way you 're sure to want to go the other. Well, now, you listen, and I 'll tell you my plans. We 'll have lots of fun if you 'll only do as I tell you, and keep your wits about you, for the honor of America, if for nothing else. Don't stop at a lie, or a hundred lies, either; we never did at school; we swore that black was white in the face of anybody, and without a blush, too. And how mad the teachers would get! One of them died through worrying about the children's bad morals, she used to say. Ha, ha, ha! Did you ever? O, my heart! but that was a good one, when we all knew that she had had a fall from her bike in coming home from a moonlight ride with John Baker, he having tried to kiss her, some one said."

"Yes," said Katy, "and that she had strained her neck to get the kiss, and that 's how she tipped over, bringing John down with her. Some thought they were fighting. John picked himself up, and without waiting to see if she was hurt, scorched away, a policeman and a gang of bikes following. Ho, ho! Ha, ha!" they both laughed.

"But look here, Mamie, are you sure the captain will marry you when the child is out of the way, for if he don't what will be the good of running the risk of being caught? And I can tell you we 'll catch it, hot too, if we 're found out."

"Of course I 'm quite sure. He 's very fond of me, and would marry me to-morrow only for his mother, who has taken it into her head that he must wait for that child to grow up. Did you ever hear such tomfoolery! The captain will be grateful to you as long as his name is not

mixed up in the affair, nor must mine appear in it, not even if you are caught; mind that, Katy, and I'll pay you well. Now I think we had better get to bed; it's near two o'clock. I'll see you again to-morrow night; and be ready to go out with me as soon as I come back with ma; I want your help to find rooms. Don't go talking with the men servants here and let the cat out of the bag; and don't let ma guess nothing, or we're lost, for I reckon she would n't help us; she's too particular by half."

"All right, Mamie, I'm off; good night. I'm afraid I shall have the nightmare after all you've told me." And she left the room on tiptoe.

Miss Hogg bolted the door and retired, saying to herself: "I'm not such a fool as to tell Katy that there's no chance of my marrying the captain and that I've been insulted, yes, turned out of the house; but I shall be revenged on all of them; I'll pulverize them; but Katy must be my tool as well as ma. How I hate those aristocrats! I wish I could jump on them, crush them; bad luck to them all with their fine airs and soft words! They never seem to get into a passion or use hard words as I do, and yet with all their soft words and calm looks they send a chill of fear through me and I can't help it; my tongue seems powerless, and though I feel mad I can't bring out the words. After all, it's nice to have been born a lady. And how grand and beautiful the captain is! What a difference there is between Englishmen and American men, some with big stomachs and short legs and others like skeletons. O, my heart, don't I wish I could marry an Englishman! I don't relish going back to America without even being engaged, for my friends to laugh at me and say I could n't get anyone to have me with all my money. But I'll tell them that I'm engaged; I'll fool them yet if I can only keep ma's mouth shut."

She fell asleep and dreamed that she had married the captain and had taken him back to America—not to her father's, but to her mother's people out West. None of them rejoiced at her conquest, but looked darkly at her, and seemed to pity Lord Montgomery, which made her very uncomfortable; she tossed her head and called them fools. Her grandmother's eyes filled with tears, and she

spoke kind words to her, but she would n't listen. Her cousin Tom, a young man a little older than herself, turned away from her in sorrow. She approached her grandfather and offered him a purse full of gold, but he pushed it away angrily. She then turned to look for Lord Montgomery, but he was no longer by her side; he seemed to be looking for something he had lost. She laughed to herself, for she knew where the something was but would not tell; her grandmother guessed it, came up to her and said, "Mamie, run after him and tell him, my dear;" but she answered, "No, never will I tell him." They all turned away from her and she felt very lonely and desolate. She went up to her cousin Tom and offered him the bag of gold, but he pushed it away with a look of indignation; she then offered him her hand, but he pushed that away too, and she was heartbroken. She then looked around for Lord Montgomery again; she saw him, but so far away that he looked like a fly on the horizon; she tried to run after him, but her feet seemed glued to the ground and she awoke with a start and a very unpleasant feeling. She had never seen her mother's people, so what made her dream of them? She had never heard of a cousin Tom. Bah! It 's all bosh! What a foolish dream, to be sure, and what do I care if they turn their backs upon me? I have never seen them and likely never shall." Still, she felt uneasy. But as it was time to get up she rang for her maid.

"Is my mother up, Katy?"

"La, yes, miss; three hours; and walking about in a fidget for fear you would n't get up to-day."

"Then it must be late?"

"Sure, it 's ten o'clock."

"Lord 'a mercy. And we that wanted to be up early; we have so much to do. Now you skedaddle and tell ma to order breakfast; I 'll be down in a jiffy; I won't say my prayers, I 've no time. I 'll tell Father M'Grath and he 'll make it all right if I give him enough."

"O, but you 're a devil, Mamie," said Katy, laughing and running away.

CHAPTER VII.

After breakfast Mrs. Hogg and her daughter left the hotel and walked as far as Russell Square, then called a passing cab. They might have taken one opposite the hotel, where there was a stand, but Miss Hogg was too cute for that. Some of her American friends might have taken it into their heads to question the cabman, and get on her track in the very first move; that would never do; so she called this cabman and asked him where he was going.

"I 'm going back to Waterloo Station, miss, where I belong."

"Are you engaged?"

"No, miss, I wish I were."

"Well, I 'll engage you then. Do you know the way about London, and can you recommend us a private hotel, not too expensive?"

"Yes, miss, there be one just a little higher up there," pointing with his thumb over his shoulder in the direction of St. Pancras Church; "and as for knowing London, miss, I can take you from the Queen's palace to the dirtiest slums in London."

They got into the cab and were driven to Thompson's Hotel, where Miss Hogg alighted alone, leaving her mother in the cab; after remaining in the hotel about ten minutes she came out again and re-entered the cab, telling the man to drive them about London to see the principal places—churches and the like. "Why," replied the man, "here be a grand church, St. Pancras; high-toned folks goes there."

Mrs. and Miss Hogg stepped down and entered the church, walked around the interior, admired the grand old edifice where so many aristocratic marriages had taken place. The pew opener saw that they were strangers, so he accosted them and offered to explain whatever interested them.

Mrs. Hogg looked on, not understanding her daughter's roundabout way, nor her motives for so much delay. Why

did she not hire the cab to go straight to the home, and why had she engaged rooms so near the Temperance Hotel? They would be seen going in and out by some one or other who knew them; really Mamie was more foolish than she had thought her to be.

As for Miss Hogg, she was questioning the man on so many subjects that he was getting dazed. "So you say that every church has a home for children?"

"O, no, miss," replied the man, "but this one has; if you come here on Sunday afternoons you 'll see lots of orphans and what nots—I mean foundlings; the girls have white caps on like French girls."

"O, yes, that must be very interesting. And you say the home is quite near here?"

"Yes, miss; your cabby is sure to know."

"My dear, don't you think that it 's getting very late," ventured Mrs. Hogg.

"All right, ma, we are going." And giving half a crown to the pew opener, they left the church, and cabby took them to St. Pancras Home for Girls, where they remained for more than two hours. Poor cabby was tired walking up and down in front of the building, and his horse had had time to empty his nose bag.

"Now, cabman," said Miss Hogg, "you drive us around, say for an hour, and then let us out at the hotel you showed us."

He took them to St. Paul's, but they would n't get out; they went past Picadilly and down the Strand to Regent Park, and back again to Thompson's Hotel, where they got out.

"Shall I wait for you, miss?" asked the cabman, touching his hat.

"No, you can go about your business; what do I owe you?"

"Twenty shillings, miss."

"Do you take me for a fool? Did you ever hear of an American being taken in by an Englishman, eh, fellow? I 'm going to give you these here fifteen shillings, and that 's five more than your due for five hours of your time. Now none of your sass to me or I 'll call for a policeman."

The cabman looked about him, but seeing no policeman, he snatched the fifteen shillings from her hand,

jumped up on his high perch, and called out, "Go to the devil; you Yankees are no ladies"; and putting his thumb to his nose, he whipped up his horse and was soon out of sight.

Miss Hogg, stamping her foot with rage, yelled, "You sassy loafer, you 're too fresh; I guess you must have the jimjams."

"Come, Mamie, let 's go in; see the people in the hotel are looking at us through the windows."

"Well, let them look; that 'll teach 'em manners;" but she went in. The cabman having disappeared there was nothing to keep her on the stoop.

The hotel was a grand, old-fashioned house, more like a private boarding house; very select. Mrs. Hogg whispered to her daughter, "Have you taken rooms here, Mamie? It is very near the hotel, my dear."

"No, ma, I have not; I only ordered dinner, so as to throw the cabman off the scent. We could n't very well be set down into the street; it would have looked as if we did n't want him to know where we lived; he would have suspected that something was going on and he would have followed us and found us out, don't you see?"

"Yes, dear. Well, let 's have dinner."

They were shown into a private room, where a very good dinner was served, and where they discussed their day's work. Mrs. Hogg could not praise enough the little girl they had chosen. She was very fair; a blonde, with large blue eyes, and quiet, retiring manners. The matron said that she must be a lady born, and if she were well dressed, and had long hair she would certainly be a beauty; but her hair was cut so short—quite close to her head. They had also seen a child with black hair and eyes, and Mrs. Hogg would have preferred her, but her daughter would n't hear of it.

"Why, ma," she said, "you admired so much that little beauty in the country, and yet you would choose the dark child in preference to this fair lily."

"Well, perhaps you are right, my dear, let 's take the fair one."

They had had to give references; Mrs. Hogg had named the American consul, and had given the matron a note for him, explaining matters. They said they would call or

send for the little girl the next day, and, putting five dollars in the matron's hand, they took their departure.

"Now, Mamie, what do you propose to do?"

"Well, ma, it 's too late to do much more to-day; when we have rested we will return to our hotel, and to-morrow morning Katy and I will see about furnished rooms, and to-morrow night we 'll take the child. Katy will stay with her and see about dressing her as a little lady should be dressed; then you can visit her every day till you leave for home; her hair will have grown long by that time, at least long enough not to cause remark, and she will have got used to us."

"You have arranged everything beautifully, my dear, and it is so good of you to give in to my whims and help me as you have done."

"That 's all right, ma. I think we had better be going, and, mind, not a word to nobody."

The next day Miss Hogg and her maid went out alone, Mrs. Hogg declaring herself too tired to accompany her daughter, who returned that evening saying in the presence of everybody that Katy had met some of her people, and that she had given her a holiday for a week or two, as she could get along without her while at the hotel.

That night mother and daughter discussed what had been done that day. Miss Hogg had taken a fine suite of rooms at Richmond; she had then gone with Katy to one of the fashionable shops and purchased ready-made clothing, the richest that could be found, and had themselves carried the parcel to the home, and the matron had dressed the child in a private room. Miss Hogg handed the matron a ten dollar bill, and then she, Katy, and the child left. They walked a few blocks, then took a cab and drove to Richmond.

The landlady had been told that the child had just recovered from a fever; that she needed quiet, and that if she made her comfortable she should be well paid for her trouble. The child was told that Katy was her nurse, and would give her cake and toys and take her for a walk when the weather was fine; that she was not to tell the landlady where she came from, or mention any of the children with whom she had lived. "I told her," said Miss Hogg, "that she was to speak of me as sister Mamie,

and of you as her ma. She is very intelligent and seemed to understand that it was for her good. When I gave her a doll she threw her arms round my neck and kissed me so affectionately that she won my heart. No one knows who her parents were; she was found near the home wrapped up in the finest of linen. She must be somebody, I can tell you. They found the name Isabelle de Courtney written on the wrapper, and so called her, but no one has ever made any inquiries about her."

"Well, dear, you have arranged everything cleverly. We 'll go to-morrow and buy a lot of dress goods and Katy can have a dressmaker down there who will fit her like a doll, with laces, ribbons, and everything that 's nice. I really begin to feel as proud of her as if she were my own."

"I believe you, ma, and you 'll be surprised how very different she looks. Clothes does a great deal, whatever some people may say about 'beauty unadorned.' "

CHAPTER VIII.

TIME passed, and everything progressed to the satisfaction of Mrs. and Miss Hogg. The latter and her maid had frequent conferences at night regarding her plan, but her time was not all her own; she had to attend parties, balls, theaters, picnics.

She had met Lord Montgomery several times since that affair, and she had forced him to speak to her in public; he could not very well refuse unless he told of the scene at his home in Cumberland, and he would never have done that and be joked and laughed at by his brother officers. The major already knew too much about Miss Hogg's doings. So Lord Montgomery kept on speaking terms with her, and one day at a picnic she said, "Well, lord captain, I guess I won't see you no more, for we are going back to America very soon, and I can't accept no more invitations, we have so many preparations to make." He bowed in silence and manifested no regret whatever, which was gall to her, for she still admired him greatly. "O, but wait, my fine gentleman," she thought; "you 'll pay dearly for this."

Shortly after this meeting Mrs. Hogg and her daughter left the Temperance Hotel, and many thought they had returned to America, instead of which, however, they were comfortably settled at Richmond, and had sent the greater part of their luggage to the Great Eastern Station to be kept until called for, so as to be more free to go about, and at the same time to be in readiness to depart at a minute's notice if circumstances required it.

Mrs. Hogg passed most of her time in the house, or walking with little Isabelle in the neighborhood, while her daughter and maid were often absent all day and until late at night. Had Mrs. Hogg been an English mother she would never have permitted her daughter to remain out until after midnight without insisting upon

knowing what had detained her and making her understand that it was not to happen again. But American mothers are not so particular; many girls stay out all night with their friends and never think of telling their mothers how they have spent their time, and the mothers seem satisfied so long as it is not proved that their daughters have actually done wrong. They have no regard for appearances; so that Miss Hogg was perfectly free to go and come as she pleased without being bothered by embarrassing questions from her mother.

They had been at Richmond for about a week when Miss Hogg said to her mother one evening: "Ma, do you think you could do without me and Katy for a few days? I want to go to Liverpool to see some of our American friends off. They are going to give a party before leaving; they have invited me, and of course I can't go alone, can I?"

"No, my dear; take Katy with you. But who is it—some one from the hotel?"

"O, dear, no; it 's Mr. and Mrs. Jackson, their son and two daughters, and Mr. and Mrs. Black and children."

"Why, my dear, I had no idea that they were here; they told me before we left that they were not going to travel this year."

"O, I guess they changed their mind. Can we go, ma?"

"Yes, my dear, and if I could I would go with you; but I must stay with this dear child; in fact, I like it far better."

"All right, ma; me and Katy will be off early, before you are up, I reckon, and so I 'll go to bed early if you don't mind."

"Yes, do so, Mamie, and mind you come back safe."

"All right, ma; don't fret if we 're gone a week. Good night, ma. And you, Isabelle, come and kiss me, little sister. I 'll bring you back some new toys."

She hurried to her room, where her maid was waiting for her, and after locking the door and stuffing a piece of paper in the keyhole, she turned to Katy and said, "Now quick; open the parcel and let me see if the clothes will fit me;" and she began to undress. Putting on the garments handed to her she found herself transformed

into a passable looking young man; gray trousers, black coat buttoned up, leaving only the collar, scarf, and rich diamond pin exposed to view.

"Now, Mamie, sit down and I 'll help you with your shoes." Luckily Miss Hogg had good sized feet, so that she really looked the young man as far as her lower limbs were concerned.

"Now for the head;" and Katy combed up Mamie's hair right on the top of her head, and pinned it there firmly; then taking up a rather broad-brimmed soft hat, with a fringe of black curly hair inside, just protruding a couple of inches around the back and sides, leaving the front bare, she adjusted it on Mamie's head, and it really fitted her to perfection. The hair reached to her temples, leaving her forehead free.

"Now for the mustache," laughed Katy. Opening a small box, she displayed a fine, thick, black mustache, which she fastened with a spring in Mamie's nose, which made her sneeze and brought tears to her eyes.

"O my heart! I shall never be able to bear it; and the hair tickles my nose awfully."

"O, you 'll get used to it. Come and see what a fine young man you are; sure an' faith I 'm fallin' in love with ye meself."

Miss Hogg walked to the cheval glass, and no sooner did she see her reflection in it than she drew back with a scream. She was so transformed that she could n't believe it was herself that she saw; it looked to her like a bold-faced young man with black hair and mustache and fierce black eyes, advancing towards her, and it gave her a fright. Then she looked again and laughed merrily at her appearance; she was sure that no one could recognize her as Miss Hogg. She was twenty-two, and rather masculine looking, with coarse features; no one would guess she was a girl; her voice might betray her if she were not careful, but not her appearance.

"This 'll do prime, Katy; why, ma herself would n't know me."

"You bet, miss, I mean sir."

"Now look here, Katy; be careful, and don't forget your part; don't call me sir, but George; and mind that you and me are in the country for a spree. You

can't come with me as my servant. Gentlemen don't generally take their servant girls out with them, do they?"

"No, George; no, dear; you 're my sweetheart, and I 'm awful proud of you. Ha, ha! But you 'll kill me with laughing."

"Well, hurry and tumble the bed as if we had slept in it; and as soon as every one 's in bed we 'll skedaddle away, take the night train for Cumberland, and get there early to-morrow morning. Is everything in the satchel?"

"Yes, George, and it 's pretty heavy too; I 'm sorry for you, George, dear."

"Indeed, you need n't be, for I 'm not going to carry it, you bet! Even if we are seen, and I seem to be imposing on the girl I love, I 'll grin and bear it, but I won't carry that thing, I guess. I 'll tell you what, though, if we meet a cab we 'll take it. Now dress yourself smart in some of my clothes."

At about one o'clock the two left the house cautiously, pulling the door to after them, and hurried away down the street.

"Hello," called out a belated fellow, "look at the swell making his girl carry his bag!"

George lifted his cane to give the fellow a whack, but Katy pulled him along, laughing so merrily that the fellow said, "Well, she 's a trump, that gal."

"Now, George," said Katy, "it won't do for you to go and get into a row. I have enough with the bag without having you to take care of, my jewel."

"Well, put that down, Katy. I see a cabby coming; I 'll call him as he passes, and he 'll think we 've come out of one of those houses."

They hired the cab and were soon at the station, but they had to wait an hour before the train started. They arrived in due time at a village in Cumberland, not more than five miles from Lady Montgomery's mansion, engaged rooms at the small tavern, and ordered breakfast. They were so merry that some of the folks said they were newly married, some that they had eloped, and some bad-minded persons that they were no better than they should be. Happily the young couple knew nothing of this and seemed to be enjoying themselves im-

mensely; they went for long rides and came back late, but always jolly.

A few days passed; then one day the carriage was brought back by a boy who said that a gentleman had given him five shillings to bring it back to the tavern; he also brought a note which contained much more than was due to the tavern keeper; and the young couple disappeared as completely as if they had never come. No one knew where they came from nor where they had gone.

CHAPTER IX.

For a few days George had gone about Lady Montgomery's grounds to watch for an opportunity to abduct Lady Florence. He had seen her in Lady Montgomery's carriage several times, or with her governess, or riding her white pony, attended by a man servant, but never alone. What was he to do? Give it up? No, never! "If I have to watch for a whole month I 'll have her or my name's not Mamie Hogg."

Well, while he was watching in the woods, among the deer, rabbits and squirrels, he had made the acquaintance of a poacher, and had told him that he was in love with the governess, and as he was already married he could n't marry her, but he meant to run away with her; would he help him? He would be well paid for his trouble if he did what he was told to do. The poacher, who had neither honor nor scruples, consented, and agreed to entice the governess to a certain spot when she took her evening walk with Lady Florence.

"But she must not bring Lady Florence with her," said George; "she must find some pretext for leaving her at some little distance and out of her sight, or the child will give the alarm, and that won't do, you know."

"O leave it to me, sir; I 'm a match for her."

"All right, my good fellow. You must also have a carriage ready and near by—I think in that lane at the back of us; I think hardly anyone passes that way."

"Sure, you 're right, sir; I can see that you understand your business, and this is not the first time that you 've been up to this kind of game; you 're a gay spark and fond of the gals. As for me, I would n't give a penny for the best looking one; my taste is for hares and rabbits; I can eat them, and I can't eat a gal."

"Well, never mind what you can eat. How will you entice the governess? She must come some distance into the wood so that the child can't see her."

"O, I know; she and the young lady are very fond of

the deer. I'll ask to speak to her out of hearing of the little miss, and then tell her that there's a deer near by that's wounded, and to come and have a look at it, but not to bring the young lady as it might give her a fright to see the blood. She'll fall into the trap for it's not the first time that deers have been killed by such as me."

"All right, my son, that'll do. Now I'll show you the spot I want her to come to, and as soon as you see me speaking to her you leave us together and slip off to the carriage, put on the livery that you'll find in the box, and be ready to start as soon as we get in. You know the road that you're to take."

"I should think I did; you have drummed it into my head, and I ain't no fool."

"Well, now, when can this business be done? I don't care to remain hereabout too long; it'll look suspicious."

"O, to-morrow, at sundown, if you wish to risk it."

"I will, for I'm awfully fond of the girl. I'll give you, as I said before, twenty pounds for your trouble; and mind, there's to be no hitch or you'll get into trouble as well as me, remember that."

"All right, sir, there'll be no hitch; I'll be here waiting for you, sure enough, and the carriage will be ready."

"Well, I'm off;" said George; "I have much to do."

He left the poacher and joined Katy in a by-lane on the other side of the park.

"Well, really, George, I thought you were never coming back, and that you had really run away with the governess;" laughing aloud.

"Don't make such a noise, Katy; everything is fixed for to-morrow, so let's go."

They entered the carriage and drove away to a small town about ten miles distant, and engaged rooms for the night.

The next morning George rode away alone, was gone for four hours and came back by omnibus. We have already seen how he had sent back the carriage to the tavern by a strange boy. The same afternoon George and Katy had hired a carriage with two good horses, and had driven away at a good pace, until they reached Lady Montgomery's grounds. Then they had gone cautiously by a narrow lane near the road, had told the cabman to

wait, and had gone into the park together but had soon separated. George had left Katy behind a bush, and told her once more what she had to do.

"O, I know well enough what I ought to do, George, but I 'm getting scared; I feel my knees knocking together; if we are caught what will happen?"

"All kinds of horrors will happen," said George, angrily, "so we must not be caught. Do you hear? And you 'd better hurry, for there 's the governess and the child coming out of the house." And George left her to join the poacher.

He said a few words to him and then disappeared among the trees, while the poacher watched the approach of the governess and child. When he thought that they were near enough for his purpose he walked toward them hurriedly as if he wished to speak to them. The governess stopped and looked at him haughtily, saying, "What are you doing in the park?"

"O, miss, I want to speak to you a minute. I know that I have no right here, but something has happened and I dare n't tell it before the little miss."

The governess took a few steps toward the wood, motioning to her charge to wait for her where she was.

"Well, what is it—have you murdered some one, or what?"

"No, miss; I ain't so bad as all that; I can poach and kill a rabbit now and then. It 's one of the large deers that has been wounded, and I want you to see it. I did n't dare go to the lodge, for Harrison would have sworn I did it, and I did n't, miss; upon my soul I did n't."

"Is it far off?"

"No, miss, just here;" and they entered the wood together, and had gone but a short distance when they saw a dark gentleman coming toward them.

"O, that must be my lord!" cried the poacher; and he took to his heels and disappeared in the wood.

The governess looked about for the deer, but could n't see it. The gentleman approached her, and bowing politely, yet not raising his hat, asked her if that fellow had insulted her.

"O, no," replied the governess, "he mistook you for my lord and ran away; he is a well known poacher and was

about to show me a deer which he said had been wounded; but now that he has run away I am at a loss where to look for it."

"Here, fellow, come back," shouted George; but no fellow made his appearance; so he offered his services to the governess, who accepted them willingly, as she was anxious to find the deer; but though they looked in every bush and frightened live ones, they found no wounded one.

After hunting for half an hour the governess gave it up, thanked the gentleman for his courtesy, and said, "I suppose that you are a friend of Lord Montgomery."

"I am, and was taking a short cut to reach the house sooner."

"And I have delayed you; accept my excuses, sir."

"Certainly, madam, I am only sorry that we did not find the deer." And he bowed, still retaining his hat, which surprised her very much. He left her and walked towards the house, and she hurried to her charge, whom she had almost forgotten in her anxiety for the deer.

George retraced his steps, reached the lane, and jumped into the cab in apparent ill humor.

"Where 's the lady?" asked the poacher. "Would n't she come?"

"The lady, indeed! She 's not the right one; and all this trouble and expense is for nothing; she 's as ugly as sin."

"So she be, sir; and I wondered at your taste, but as love is blind I said nothing. Indeed it would need a great deal of love to be blind in this case; she 's a fright! But about my money, sir?"

"O, the devil take you, you 'll get it. But drive on. If my wife hears of this there 'll be the devil to pay. She looked at me very queerly when I left her and I told her that I would be away three weeks. 'You may not be away as long as you expect, dear,' she replied with a curious smile. So drive on smart."

"The road you told me, sir?"

"Certainly; just as I told you."

And the coachman, in his green livery, whipped up his horses and soon disappeared in the darkness. George had done his part cleverly.

CHAPTER X.

As soon as George had left Katy she worked her way among the trees till she almost reached the spot where the poacher met the governess, and, crouching behind the trunk of a large oak tree, in the long grass, she heard every word that passed between them, and could take her clew from that. Her dress was dark and soft; it made no noise. As soon as the governess and the poacher had got into the thickest of the wood she came out of her hiding place and walked quietly toward the litle girl, who was amusing herself plucking daisies. Shė went around so that she could face her and the child could see her coming towards her and not be alarmed by having her come from behind her.

The girl walked up at her approach and asked her, "Have you seen Miss Wilson?"

Katy guessed that it was her governess she was speaking about, and she answered, "Yes, dear; you are Lady Florence, I believe?"

"Yes; did she send you to me?"

"She did; I was just passing in my carriage when I heard some one calling. I looked out of the window and saw a lady who seemed in great distress; she asked me to send my coachman to fetch a little girl about eight years old that she was governess for; she had left her in the park while she went to see a wounded deer. The deer is dying, and she wished Lady Florence to see it, as it was her favorite one. I said that the child might be afraid to come with a strange man and that the horses could not be left alone; if they were to move I could never manage them, but that I would go if she would tell me where she had left you. Now, my dear, will you come, or are you afraid of me?"

"I am not afraid of anyone," replied the child, proudly; "I will go. Make haste; I want to see my deer before he dies."

"Come this way, my child. I ordered my coachman to meet us at this side of the park; it won't take us so long to go by the lane as through all those bushes;" and taking the child by the hand, she hurried her away.

Lady Florence had no need of urging; she began to run and Katy had hard work to keep up with her without running too. When she reached the place where she had left her carriage she found the coachman fast asleep on his box; so she got in with the child, and pulling the string, she awoke him and called out, "Hurry up, Tom; it is getting late;" and off they went at a gallop. "We have to hurry, you know, my dear, or it will be too dark for you to see the deer."

"What beautiful flowers!" said the child, picking up a bouquet from the front seat; "may I smell them?"

"Certainly, my dear, you can have it for yourself if you want it."

"O, thank you." And the child buried her face in the flowers. Soon her hands dropped in her lap and the bouquet fell to the floor.

Katy gave it a kick which sent it far under the seat, and taking the child, who was fast asleep, she laid her gently on the front seat, and said, "What a lovely child! No wonder Mamie is jealous of her! I wonder what she 's going to do with her! If I 'm caught I 'll tell it was all Miss Hogg's doings."

After an hour's ride the carriage stopped in a dark lane near the main road. It had not been there many minutes when another carriage was heard coming at good speed down the main road; it stopped at the head of the lane and a man alighted and said to the coachman, "We have lost them; I no longer hear the carriage. We must have lost them at the crossroads; they must have kept straight on, or stopped while we passed them and turned on this road. I 'm sure that I heard them far ahead."

"You must be right, Harrison. I am sure that I heard them myself. What shall I do, turn back and take the other road? There may be a chance of catching them yet; their horses can't be as good as ours."

"Yes, John, we had better turn back; it is getting so dark that I can scarcely see my hand before me;" and

so saying, he walked near the head of the lane and looked; but it was so dark that he did n't see the carriage, which was only about ten yards away from him. He then went back, re-entered his carriage, and they turned about and went back at a gallop, to the great relief of Katy, who had been very much alarmed during the dialogue.

CHAPTER XI.

WHEN Katy had heard the sound of carriage wheels she had felt sure that it was George, and had been on the point of calling out to him; but luckily for herself and George she did not. When she heard the voice she knew at once that it was not George, but who could it be? She did not have to wait long for an answer to this question. Some one was already on their track; a fine mess they had made of it! Why should they take it into their heads to turn into the lane? She was lost! Was she to remain where she was and be caught like a rat in a trap? I guess not. She had not been born in America, and lived there for twenty years without knowing a thing or two; and though her knees trembled so that she could hardly stand, the fear of being caught gave her strength, and she would show Miss Hogg that she was every bit as cute as she herself was; so at the first word she heard she opened the carriage door as gently as possible, and taking the sleeping child in her arms, she alighted, and creeping along the hedge for some distance she managed to get over it, and when on the other side, she retraced her steps and stopped quite near to where the two men were talking, in order to hear, if possible, what their intentions were, and to shape her course accordingly. She crouched close to the hedge in the long grass; as she did this a dry branch snapped, and to her fear-stricken mind it sounded like a cannon shot. She expected to see the men jump the hedge and seize her, but they had not even heard the noise, as their horses were kicking the ground with impatience to get away. She felt much relieved when they had gone; still, she was uncertain what to do; if she returned to her carriage they, or others on the hunt, might find it. She could not run from them; they would be sure to catch her. And again, she was at the appointed place; George would come for her there if he could come at all; but if she left the place, and the others were in hot pursuit, where could she find him? She had no wish to take all the responsibility on her own shoulders; no, she must stay where she was and be on the watch for George.

When her cabman was tired of waiting he could go away if he chose; it might be as well if he did. What fun! What would he think when he found his cab empty?

But should the child wake what would she do? A cold shiver ran down her back, and she again became weak at the knees. She fancied that she already felt the child moving. What if she should awake and scream, as would be natural enough, finding herself in total darkness in a field, with a strange woman? Katy trembled all over and repented having had anything to do with the matter. They would both find themselves in jail, and that was no fun; they could not escape.

But no sound of carriage wheels was to be heard. What was he doing? Had he been caught, if not by those who had just left, perhaps by others? For when once the alarm was given that the young lady was missing, there would be a crowd of servants hunting for her; and the police must already know all about it. "If Miss Hogg is arrested she will deny everything and I shall have to bear all the blame," thought Katy, and the perspiration ran down her face like beads.

"The child is really moving. What shall I do? I must do something. George may come yet. If I had those flowers I would put her to sleep again. I must get them at all hazard;" and, though trembling with fear, she managed to slip the child from her lap to the ground and to creep along the hedge for a few yards; she then climbed over it and found herself in the lane a short distance from the cab. She walked cautiously and yet hurriedly, for she feared the child would awake before she could get back to her. She did not wish her cabman to see her, for should he be caught he would be sure to betray her. She thought it safer to remain in the field where George was sure to come, if he himself was not caught, than to trust herself with the child to the care of the cabman, who had no interest in the matter except his fare. So, approaching the cab cautiously, holding her very breath, she reached the door, which she had left open, and thrusting in her hand she got the bouquet and also a rug, and rolling the bouquet into the rug, she hurried away, hearing the cabman say: "How long are we to stay here? I did n't agree to pass the night out.—They certainly

must be asleep in there, for I have already asked them twice.—I say, you people inside there, are you asleep or what? I 'm getting sleepy myself and I want to go home. —O, I 'll get down and wake them. Hello, the door 's open and the cab empty; they 've fooled me. How long have they been gone, I wonder. They must have gone in that other cab that was here half an hour ago. It was all a trick, pretending to be chasing game. If ever I 've been fooled in my life I have been this time, and the less I say about it the better it 'll be for me, for if it was known amongst the fellows I 'd be their laughing stock. To stand in a dark lane for an hour or more with an empty cab and talk to the wind. Well, I 'm blamed! If I had that swell and his girl here I 'd give him my mind."

It will be remembered that the man was asleep when Katy got in with the child, and he had no idea that the occupants of his carriage were not the same people that he had taken down to the park. He knew the road that he was to take on leaving the park, and where to stop, but for how long, he had not been told; so he had waited and had had two or three naps; but at last he had got tired and called to his fares, but receiving no answer had stepped down to find his cab empty; so mounting his box again, not in the best of humors, and lashing his poor horses as if they were to blame, he turned into the main road, taking the same road as the other cab, and Katy was left alone with the child, a prey to great anxiety.

She had reached the child just in time to give her another dose of the sleeping draught; and, wrapping her in the rug, she laid her on the grass, and waited for George, planning what she should do if the latter did not make his appearance. She must wait till nearly daylight. If he had not come by that time she would put the child in the lane against the hedge, well wrapped in the rug,—that would tell no tales, it belonged to the cabman,—and she would leave her there, go to the nearest station, and return to London. No one could prove that she had had a hand in the affair. Still, she felt very uneasy. What could have happened to George? Whatever it was he could not have betrayed the place of appointment or they would have come straight there, and she had seen no one—nothing except the carriage in pursuit.

CHAPTER XII.

After riding for some time George ordered the poacher to stop, and listening attentively for a moment, he thought: "I was not mistaken; I hear carriage wheels following us; but who is it, friends or foes? It may be Katy running after me instead of going to the appointed place, being afraid in the dark, and it may be some one from the mansion. Perhaps they have already missed Lady Florence; but that can hardly be; it is too early yet; they have had no time. I wish I knew who it is; how shall I find out?"

"Well, sir, is there anything the matter? Where do you want me to go?"

"I wish to find out who is following us; I 'm afraid it is my wife. Can you manage to find out without letting them come up with us? I hate a scene, and if it should be my wife there will be no end to her tongue; she has a terrible temper."

"O, all right, sir; I 'll fix matters if we can only reach the crossroad; there 's a field; we will run into it; the gate is always open; we can close it after us and stay there snug enough till they pass us, and I 'll have a peep over the hedge and find out who it is if it is n't too dark."

"All right, go ahead; I see you 're a sharp fellow," was George's answer, and they did go ahead; but whatever it was following was going ahead also, and gaining fast upon them.

The poacher whispered, "That 's never cab horses that 's coming behind us. Who can it be? If you had the governess with you, sir, I 'd say that we 're pursued, and that those horses belongs to Lady Montgomery; but as you have n't, it must be your wife, as you said, and as you don't want to have it out with her in the open country, why, we 'll run into the field and wait till she 's cooled down a bit."

They reached the crossroad and a little beyond; they turned to the left and ran on soft ground; they were

in the field; the poacher closed the gate and led his horses a few yards from the gate behind a clump of trees. "Now," said he, "you keep quiet, and I 'll have a look at them as they pass."

"All right," replied George; "but I hear two carriages now, don't you?"

The poacher listened and said, "Yes, the one near us, and the other far away on the right; perhaps they will take it for ours and leave us in peace."

But they held their breath, for the carriage was approaching nearer and nearer until it stopped before reaching the gate, and the party inside and the coachman consulted as to what road they should take. "Listen," said the coachman, "don't you hear carriage wheels at a distance on our right? They must have good horses; I had no idea they were so far ahead."

"Yes, I hear; don't let us waste time, but go like the wind. It is a matter of life and death. I had just time to send to Lady Montgomery to tell her that——"

But the listeners heard no more. "What can be the matter?" said the poacher; they 're not after us; there 's something else—something very grave the matter from what we heard them say. The man inside is Harrison, the lodge keeper. How he came to be in Lady Montgomery's carriage instead of on horseback is beyond me. Now, sir, if you wish to go to the railway station that you told me of we shall have to follow the same road that they have taken; but it can't matter; they 're not after us, and there 's no sign of your wife yet."

"Let 's wait a little longer," said George, who did not know exactly how to act. He knew that Katy was in the carriage in the distance, that Harrison was after that carriage, and that it would not be long before he reached it; probably they would meet at the head of the lane, and Katy, mistaking it for his cab, would fall into Harrison's hands. There seemed no way of escape or of warning her.

Miss Hogg was brave and fond of adventure, but this was getting too hot; she had not expected that they would be on her track so soon.

How had they discovered the disappearance of Lady Florence? Perhaps by some mismanagement of Katy in

her hurry to get the child away; perhaps she had forced her away and she had screamed, and, of course, was heard, and perhaps seen, by some one who gave the alarm; and though perhaps Katy had been able to reach her cab and drive away through the lanes as they had agreed, they had given chase, but to him, not her, so that she was likely to reach the appointed place in safety; but he would not be there to help her; she would stay there, of course, waiting for him, and would be caught and brought back.

What a mess Katy had made of it! Would she tell who had employed her to steal the child? Surely not; it could do her no good; still, he could hardly believe that she would remain silent and perhaps undergo a term of imprisonment for his sake. She had no object herself in taking the child, and would naturally say so; then, by questioning her they would soon discover who had tempted her to the deed.

He had come to a dead halt; he did n't dare go to the meeting place, nor to go away without knowing what was going to happen to Katy. That she would be taken there could be no doubt whatever; even if she made a run for it that would n't change matters.

Where could she go? If she went to the railway station she would be nabbed by the police, who were very likely waiting for her there. It was a bad business altogether; the papers would be full of it.

And so poor George worked himself into a fever, and certainly his position was no more enviable than was Katy's.

"What do you wish me to do?" said the poacher. "Shall we take the road these parties have gone by or shall I take you to the station by a roundabout way?"

"Well, wait a little longer; perhaps they will come back; then the road will be clear. I don't hear the carriage now, do you?"

"No, sir, neither of them."

"O," thought George, "they 're at the head of the lane by this time, and have got Katy and the child. I feel as Katy did—my knees trembling and a cold shiver running down my spine. I did n't know I was such a coward. Come, Mamie Hogg, what are you made of, to give way like this at the first check? There would be no fun in

it if it had all gone smoothly. Come now, there must be a way out, and I shall find it."

"I hear carriage wheels, sir."

"One or two carriages?" asked George.

"Only one so far," replied the poacher, "and if I 'm not mistaken they 're coming this way at a furious rate. Shall we stay here till they 've passed us?"

"Yes; but let us try and see if there 's anyone in the carriage besides Harrison."

"All right, sir, we can do that easy; the moon is now up, and if no cloud hides it when they pass us we can easily see if there is more than one in the carriage. Here they are; let 's be on the lookout;" and each hid behind a bush in the hedge.

A dark cloud at that moment covered the moon, so that, though they could hear the carriage, they could no longer see it; but they heard the coachman call out, "Which way, up or down?"

"Up, of course," was the answer, and up they came, passing the gate where George was.

A moment more and the road would have been clear for him to reach the meeting place, though he hardly now expected to find Katy there; but, as ill luck would have it, one of the poacher's horses neighed just as the others passed the gate. I suppose, hearing his own kind, he spoke to him in his own way; but as soon as it happened the carriage stopped at about fifteen yards from the gate; they were going at such a rate that the horses could not be pulled up sooner. If George had felt discouraged before how must he have felt now? Well, not so bad as might have been expected. He would have to use his wits, and he meant to do it. As quick as lightning a plan entered his head; he knew that they had not found Katy, and that knowledge gave him courage. He waited to see what their next move would be and he did not have to wait long.

"There they are," called out Harrison, jumping out and rushing to the gate.

"I 'll manage Harrison if you 'll tackle the coachman and keep him from interfering with me," whispered George; and getting behind the gate, he threw his whole weight against it.

"But it 's not us they want, sir."

"You hold your tongue and do as I tell you; push with your whole strength, and when I say 'Let go,' then let go, and tackle your man; it will be easy."

Harrison had pushed the gate, thinking it was open, for there was no lock on it, but as it did not give way he tried the other way, thinking that it must open on the inside, but it did n't; so he called to John to come and help him, and they both pushed with all their might.

"They may not be there," said John; "it may be only one of the horses that has been left out."

"No, it is n't; I just heard a whispering. Now then, once more; push together." And they rushed together with all their might against the gate, which flew open, and the two men fell flat to the ground half stunned, and blood issuing from their mouths and noses.

Harrison did not seem able to get up; the coachman looked about him as if he did not know where he was, and when he would have arisen the poacher gave him a blow on the ear that laid him low again. Then looking for George, who was nowhere to be seen, he saw the carriage that had been left in the road going back at full gallop over the road they had passed; but whether they were running away or being driven away he could n't tell. They must be running away; something has frightened them; they are spirited horses; they have taken the bit between their teeth and will smash the carriage. But where 's the gentleman? He must have run away or perhaps is hiding in the cab; but he was not in the cab. He did n't know what to do; should he wait for him or what? He looked at the two men; they certainly looked bad. Harrison's head had hit a stone and was bleeding profusely; he must not be left there to die; the other was still stunned. He must put them both in the cab, tie their hands, drive back to Lady Montgomery's, ring the bell, and leave them at the lodge. Then he would return. If he was stopped on the way he would say that he had found these men on the road and was bringing them back, as he knew Harrison to be Lady Montgomery's lodge keeper.

So he managed to drag the two men to his cab and get them in; he tied their hands tightly behind their backs with their handkerchiefs, and leading his horses out of the

field, he closed the gate, mounted his box, and drove away towards the lodge, which he had almost reached, when a horseman came out of the gate at full speed and nearly collided with his cab.

The rider reined up and asked, "Who are you, and what do you want at the house?"

The poacher was well disguised in his green livery; no one would have looked for him in that guise. Lord Montgomery did not recognize him—for it was Lord Montgomery.

"I 'm a cabman, sir," said the poacher. "I 've brought a fare to the tavern yonder, and was going back to the station. I heard a carriage a tearing away as if the devil was after it, and I be thinking 'them horses is running away with the bit between their teeth,' and sure enough, as they passed me like the wind the reins were hanging about their legs, no coachman on the box, and the door hanging wide open; there was no one inside, and as I could n't stop it I went on my way, and about a mile further I saw by the moonlight two black things right in the middle of the road. I got down to see what it could be, and it was as I had suspected, the owners of the run-away carriage; the coachman must have lost control of his horses, the man inside tried to get out to help him, and they were both dashed to the ground. I picked them up and I have them here."

"Are they dead?" asked the captain, dismounting; and throwing the bridle over his arm he walked towards the cab.

"O, no, sir; but they be very much hurt, I 'm thinking, and no senses at all;" and opening the cab door he bent over them apparently to see how they were, but in reality untying their hands and stuffing the handkerchiefs in their pockets.

"Where am I?" murmured the coachman, "and where 's —where 's—O, my head 's awful bad."

"Can I take him to the lodge?" asked the poacher, who feared to be compromised by the man now that he was recovering.

"Yes, my man, you had better do so. I must be off myself, or I would go with you. Here, take this for your trouble," and he gave him a sovereign and rode away.

The poacher hurriedly closed the door, and climbing up on his box he lashed his horses and was soon at the lodge door. He told Mrs. Harrison that an accident had happened to her husband and the coachman, and my lord had sent him back with them to the lodge. He was a stranger in these parts himself, and ought to be back at his master's by this time. If she would tell him what to do with the men he would carry them in.

But when Mrs. Harrison saw her husband covered with blood she uttered a scream and fainted away, leaving the way clear for the poacher, who hurriedly brought the men in on his back and laid them on the floor. He was going to carry Mrs. Harrison in also, but seeing signs of her recovery, he mounted his box and drove away, going through a lane of which he knew, and which would take him to the field where he supposed that George was in hiding.

But George had not wasted his time hiding. As soon as he realized that Harrison was senseless on the ground, and that the poacher was likely to be a match for the coachman, he rushed into the road where the carriage was, jumped on the box and drove away at a furious rate after turning the carriage round.

"Now for Katy," he thought; "if she is still there we may succeed yet, and if not, I 'll drive till I get near the station and then I 'll let these horses loose, and it will be thought that they have run away. If I can save Katy I will, but if not, I must save myself."

He soon reached the place and turned into the lane, but no cab; "O, it 's too bad after all this trouble; where is she? O, I think I shall go mad this night," he said aloud.

"No, honey, you won't," a voice answered behind the hedge.

"O, is that you, Katy? Come, be quick; we 're followed. Have you the child?"

"Yes; help me with her over the hedge; I 'm almost crazy waiting for you. How came you to be dressed like a coachman? Where did you get that cape?"

"On the box here. But don't let 's talk now; we 're in great danger. This is Lady Montgomery's carriage—what do you think of that, eh? I 'll tell you all about it when

we 're safe. What 's the matter with you, that makes you walk so?"

"I guess you 'd walk as bad if you 'd been cramped up in a heap as I 've been for hours waiting for you; and I 've got a tale to tell you too," said Katy.

After getting into the carriage George gave her the child, and, remounting the box, he drove off at full gallop, but not to the station, as he had intended doing had they not been followed so quickly.

Miss Hogg was a good rider, and a good driver too—a real tomboy; but she did n't know her way very well in these parts, and she wished more than once that the poacher was with her. She drove into a lane which led to a farmhouse, and had to turn back; it was a great waste of time; and when she reached the main road she was puzzled to know whether to turn to the right or to the left; she got down to ask Katy and found her fast asleep in the carriage, so that she had to dispense with her opinion. Poor George! He was nonplused and getting very tired; what could he do? He was still deliberating when he heard the gallop of a horse; he backed sharply into the lane, just in time to escape being seen by the horseman, who was no other than Lord Montgomery, who kept straight on his way, never thinking of looking in a lane that he well knew only led to a farm, and none but a fool would enter such a trap. He was going to the railway station to ascertain if there was any news of Florence, never dreaming that she was so near for he very naturally thought they were far away by this time or caught at some station. "We shall soon hear of them," he thought. "What a pity that Harrison and the coachman were hurt! They might have overtaken them, for they must have had a carriage or how could they have taken the child away, and how came she not to call for her governess? If she had called she would have been heard even from the lodge. I don't understand it at all, for Florence is brave, and would not be taken against her will without a struggle; she must have been coaxed and deceived, and not forced. I wonder who did the deed—could it be Miss Hogg? What would be her motive? And the disgrace and punishment she would bring on herself; and what would she gain by it? Nothing whatever; so it was not she, but

some showman who had been attracted by her great beauty."

He arrived at the station and saw the detective pacing the platform, and though he saw Lord Montgomery he took no notice of him, but walked away to the other end of the platform, seemingly very impatient for the arrival of the train. Lord Montgomery wished to speak to him; it was important that he should do so; and yet he knew that the detective must have good reasons for avoiding him. Perhaps he had a clew; and, as he was deliberating whether to go back without speaking to the detective or to wait there until the detective came to him, he saw a ragged looking man approaching him in a slouching, lazy manner, who said in a coarse, stupid way, "Shall I hold your horse, sir?" touching the bridle with his dirty hand. Then looking at Lord Montgomery with bright, intelligent black eyes, he whispered, "Have you any news, sir? We have none as yet. If you have something to say to Mr. Walgrave I 'll manage it for you; I 'm one of his men."

"All right, my man, you can hold my horse; but first go and see if there is a small parcel for Lady Montgomery. Tell Mr. Walgrave that I must speak to him near here," he whispered, and the man walked away with the same shuffling gait that he came with, and slouched into the office.

The detective was just going in fuming with impatience and saying in a loud voice, "Will the train never come? What 's the cause of the delay? It must be an hour behind time."

"What train do you refer to?" asked the clerk.

The tramp-looking man had been scribbling something on a piece of paper, just behind the detective, who stood with his hands behind his back, holding a leather bag, and in his impatience changing it from one hand to the other. The tramp, who also seemed to have business with the clerk, approached the window, and in passing the detective slipped the paper into his hand and knocked clumsily against him.

"Hello, fellow. What are you doing here? Is n't the place large enough for you that you must nearly knock me down?"

The tramp looked daggers at him, mumbling that he was as good as any man, and drew back.

"Well, what place did you say?" asked the clerk again.

"O," said the detective, "let me see"—looking all the time at the piece of paper given to him by the tramp —"well, it 's Birmingham, I mean."

"We have no trains to Birmingham; the next one is for London, and from London you can go to Birmingham; but there are no trains for two hours yet."

"Two hours, did you say?"—and he wrote it down in his note book. The clerk did not answer, but turned to the tramp and asked what he wanted.

"I want a parcel for Lady Montgomery."

"Are you her servant?"

"Sure, I be," answered the tramp, putting his hands in his trousers pockets and straightening himself up.

"Get out with you! There 's no parcel, and if there was you would n't get it, so get out."

"Why should I get out? Ain't I as good as you? A man 's a man, whether he 's dressed in fine clothes or rags; and I 'm better looking than you are, though you may not think so."

The detective laughed. He had been putting down time of departure for London. He now put his note book in his pocket and managed to drop a leaf of it on the floor, and laughingly turning away, he walked out as the clerk was saying angrily, "If you don't clear out I 'll spoil that beauty of yours, my fine fellow."

"You can't do it," said the tramp, picking up a dirty piece of rag that he called handkerchief.

He had picked up, with his handkerchief, the piece of paper dropped by the detective, and after he left the office he opened it out and held it before him, seemingly admiring it; he then walked back to where he had left Lord Montgomery, and saying, "There is n't any parcel, sir," slipped the paper into his hand, while seemingly holding his horse for him to dismount, adding, "you will find Mr. Walgrave behind the station; he is waiting for you. It is very dark, shall I show you the way?"—and he walked the horse toward the gable. They had been standing under the lighted station, consequently could

not see so well in the dark, and they did n't see the detective, but he saw them, and hurrying towards them, said, "This way, my lord, and you, Stephen, tie the horse to that ring and be off and ready to represent me in two hours at the station. Follow anyone you see with a fair little girl, or a child wrapped up, or apparently sick, for it is hard to tell how they are going to try to smuggle her away."

"All right, sir, and when and where shall I meet you again?" asked Stephen.

"Well, it will depend; should you have to follow by train leave word at the ticket office for me and telegraph to London for aid in case of need, and also here at headquarters, to let me know your movements. If I don't hear from you I 'll come in some guise and relieve you. Don't show yourself as a tramp again."

"No, sir."

Throwing off his ragged coat and trousers, and jamming the old hat into one of the pockets, he put the bundle into the detective's leather bag, and walked away into the station with his bag in his hand, and to all appearance the same gentleman who wanted to go to Birmingham.

All this was very well acted, but so far it was labor lost. The guilty parties for whom this trap was set were far away and in great trouble themselves.

"Come this way, my lord, it would not be safe to stay here too long."

"But my horse," said Lord Montgomery.

"O, it will be all right there; no one will think it strange; you will be supposed to have gone into the station."

They walked away, going into a kind of garden belonging to the station master, and going behind the summerhouse they sat down on the trunk of an old tree.

"Now, my lord, what news have you? As for me, I have none whatever. I have been here watching and no one has gone by train accompanied by any child, large or small; I am positive of that."

"I have no news either," replied the captain; "I came here hoping that you had succeeded in tracing them, whoever they may be. All the news I have is that as I came out of the park gate I met a cabman coming to the

lodge bringing back our coachman and Harrison, whom he had found senseless on the road; he thought they had been thrown senseless from the carriage, as he had passed an empty one about a mile from where he had found the men."

The detective slapped his knees with his open hands and said "There 's a clew at last. Who was that cabman, and how came he to bring the two senseless men to the lodge? He must have known them."

"He did not say, and I was in a hurry to get here and did n't ask many questions, but told him to go to the lodge. I asked him if they were dead; he said no, but very much hurt. What clew do you see in that?"

"I see this, my lord: that your coachman was not likely to allow his horses to get the better of him; nor were such well trained horses likely to take the bit between their teeth; and as the carriage was not smashed how came the men to be hurt? The coachman was not the man to fall off his seat, no matter how fast the horses went; and how came Harrison, who was in the coach, to be found on the road near the coachman, even supposing that the coachman had fallen off his seat? The horses would have run a long-distance at the rate that runaway horses usually go, before Harrison could have jumped out, and such a man as Harrison was not likely to hurt himself, and even so, he would not have been found near the coachman. It is more probable that they overtook the carriage running away with the young lady; that a battle followed, and your people got the worst of it and were sent back in the very carriage they had overtaken; and that your horses, being much superior to theirs, were used to run away with your cousin; so that we have a clew, as I said before. I must see the men and hear what they have to say, and then get track of your carriage; when we have done that we will be on the track of the miscreant. So let us go, my lord, we must not waste time."

"Yes, you had better take my horse," said the captain.

"O, no, I have my own near by," said Mr. Walgrave. "If you will go ahead I will overtake you on the road."

This was done, and they galloped until they reached the lodge, which was more brilliantly lighted than usual and people were coming and going as if something serious

had happened. They went in; men and women servants from the mansion were there. Mrs. Harrison stood weeping, with her apron to her eyes, while her husband sat in his armchair with his head bandaged and his lips and nose swollen. The coachman lay on the floor with a pillow under his head. The doctor sat with his hands on his knees watching his patients, and the servants were coming and going, the men discussing the occurrence.

The detective was supposed to be a friend of Lord Montgomery; he induced Harrison and the coachman to repeat all that had happened to them. Harrison told how he had tried to open the gate, and how it had suddenly given way and they had both fallen to the ground, and had been clubbed by some one—being stunned by the fall, they did n't know whom; they had lost consciousness and remembered nothing more until they found themselves in the lodge and Mrs. Harrison standing over them. She had sent their boy to the housekeeper for help and a doctor, and that was how the doctor and the servants were there. He knew nothing more.

Of course our readers already knew all that Harrison had related, as far as he was concerned—how they had thought themselves to be on the track of the abductors—and he still believed that it was they who had clubbed him and the coachman, and Mr. Walgrave agreed with him, but said nothing more; and Lord Montgomery having heard all that could be learned was in a hurry to go; so he arose, telling the doctor to look after the welfare of the two men.

"Thank you, my lord," said Harrison. "I 'll be all right by to-morrow, though I have a thundering headache to-night, and my face will be a sight for a week; and I believe that John will soon mend; what do you say, John?"

"I don't know; I don't feel right in my head; it 's full of noises; and I feel the bone behind my ear so sore, as if it was smashed with the blow that tall fellow gave me as I was getting up after my fall."

"Well, the doctor will see to you both; good night," said Lord Montgomery, as he walked out, followed by Walgrave, who said, as soon as they were out of earshot:

"It is as I told you, my lord. You had better return home and tell Lady Montgomery that we are on their track

and are almost sure to bring the young lady back before daylight, for it will be easy to follow their carriage; it cannot pass unnoticed through a village, as a cab would. I am going to send men to every road hereabouts leading to any station or town. I have telegraphed to London for three good detectives besides those we have here. I will depend on you, my lord, for horses."

"Certainly, Mr. Walgrave; command my servants and my horses; they are at your service; and if I can help you myself, command me too."

"You cannot help me now, my lord, so you had better go and take a rest. I 'll be at your place early to-morrow morning. Good night."

And they parted; Lord Montgomery to return home, and the detective to look after his men.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE alarm had been quickly given after Katy had enticed the child away

As soon as the governess emerged from the wood into the clearing she looked about for her charge and came face to face with Harrison, who said: "Why, Miss Wilson, how came you here? I thought I had seen you and Lady Florence on the other side of the park going into the back lane all of a hurry about half an hour ago, and now you 're here alone looking for your young lady."

"I am looking for her," replied Miss Wilson. "I left her here a short time ago to look after a wounded deer, and I have just come back and have not found the deer; and if you met Lady Florence at the other side of the park she was not with me. Perhaps she was with some lady visitors."

"It may be; still, that is strange. Who told you about the wounded deer?"

"Why, that loafer, Jerry the poacher."

"And why did n't he show you where it was?"

"He was going to do so when he saw a dark gentleman coming towards us whom he mistook for my lord, and ran away. The dark gentleman helped me to look for the deer, but we did n't find it, and he left me to go to the house, as he was a friend of my lord's, and I came back here where I had left Lady Florence; so you see that it could not have been I that you saw with her."

"No, but this is all very strange; you had better hurry to the house and inquire if she has come back; it is getting dark; she would never be out at this late hour. I will go with you. Hark! I hear carriage wheels in the lane back of us; no carriages ever go in that lane; there must be something wrong. O, if I had a horse! But I have n't. I shall have to go to the stables."

He ran ahead of the governess, who ran also, mad with fear for her charge's safety.

As Harrison neared the house he saw Lady Mont-

gomery alighting from her carriage, alone; no child with her. The coachman was about to return to the stables when Harrison called to him to stop, and asked him if Lady Florence was in the house.

"How should I know?" asked the coachman, laughing, "do you take me for her governess?"

"No, Mr. Harrison, she is not in the house," said a maid from the doorsteps; "she is out with her governess; she ought to be in; my lady will be displeased that she is kept out so late."

"Tell your lady that she is not with her governess and that I am afraid she has been enticed away."

He jumped into the carriage, and called "Drive on, John, for your life."

The governess reached the house at that moment, hatless, hair flying, and wringing her hands in despair, for it was no joke to have lost the young Lady Florence De La Rochefoucauld.

Harrison called to her as he passed her, "The young lady has not returned."

We already know what happened to him and the coachman. That was how Harrison came to be in Lady Montgomery's carriage—to save time, and to be better able to bring back Lady Florence should they succeed in overtaking her abductors.

The governess and the maid rushed at the same time into Lady Montgomery's boudoir, and it was some time before they could make themselves understood, and to tell what had happened, so far as they knew. Lady Montgomery was stunned, and sending the maid in search of Lord Montgomery, she made the governess repeat all that had happened, and what Harrison had told about having seen Lady Florence in the company of a lady, and seemingly going with her of her own free will. It was incomprehensible. Her ladyship, a prey to great anxiety, went down and gave orders for some of the men servants to search the woods and lanes, and that Lord Montgomery be sent to her as soon as he returned.

But nearly an hour passed before he came in, very much excited, having learned from the servants that his cousin had disappeared. His mother said there was no

time to explain matters; that he must immediately see that the police were apprised of it.

"They have already been, I am told," he answered; "Joe went there himself. They are watching every station. I am going to see if they have been caught."

He hurried away, saying, "Don't fret, dear mother, they can't have gone far; we will soon have our darling back again."

We have seen how he met the cab with Harrison and the coachman wounded, on his way to the station.

Lady Montgomery was trying to compose herself and to appear calm among her servants. She retired to her boudoir, leaving orders that she be notified if any message came about Lady Florence.

Shortly after Lord Montgomery's departure the housekeeper had knocked, then entered, flushed and excited.

"O, my lady, something more has happened."

"What is it, speak. Is it your master?"

"No, my lady; it's Harrison and the coachman; they have both been murdered and brought back to the lodge dead."

"Who brought the news?"

"Harrison's boy; and he asked that we should send some one to help his mother, and also a doctor."

"Well, send at once, and let some one ride for a doctor. What can have happened? How dreadful! But it may not be so bad. The child is so young; he may have seen blood on his father and thought him dead."

Now that we have explained matters up to the point where the detective was going to send his men on the search, let us follow him and see how he succeeded. He returned to the station, where he found Stephen at his post. He gave a low whistle, and Stephen appeared and followed him behind the station.

"Well," said Walgrave, "what news?"

"Nothing," replied Stephen, "only that the three detectives have arrived and they are at headquarters awaiting your orders."

"All right, Stephen, keep a sharp lookout here. We have a clew. Harrison and the coachman have been nearly murdered by the parties who took the child, and they have also run away with Lady Montgomery's carriage; but

they won't be able to go far without detection. Now I 'm off to headquarters; you stay here and follow any suspicious looking person."

He hurried away to see the newly arrived detectives and set each one his task. He found four fine horses waiting there which Lord Montgomery had sent for their use. He sent out two of the men, each in a different direction, and ordered them to meet him at six in the morning at Lord Montgomery's. He went away himself, well mounted on one of the horses sent by Lord Montgomery, accompanied by the other detective, equally well mounted. They took the road to where Harrison and the coachman had been clubbed.

The night was far advanced and very dark, though there was a moon; but the clouds were so thick and dark that it only peeped out at short intervals to leave them again in darkness. It was easy to see that a storm was coming on, and before they had arrived at the gate spoken of by Harrison it was raining hard.

"Well, this is pleasant," said Walgrave, who was dressed in a light suit. "I feel like a drowned rat. Here we are at the gate; hold my horse and I will go in and investigate;" and taking a dark lantern from his breast pocket, he opened the gate, and saw at once that a carriage had been there, and must have been there for quite a while, for the grass was much trodden where the horses had stood. He also saw, by following the track that the wheels had made in the soft ground, that the carriage had gone out again; and just inside the gate there were marks of many feet as if a struggle had taken place there. But no other clews could be found; there was nothing in the field more than they already knew; and on the road they could see no tracks, as it had been made new quite recently, and, like many country roads, of stones.

"I wonder which way they went," said Walgrave, "up or down."

"O, I should say up," replied the other detective. "They would never have gone toward the place where they stole the child; they must have gone toward town."

"All right," said Walgrave, "but it is my idea that they may just as well have gone the other way;" and, mounting, they galloped away, stopping at every village

they came to, inquiring for the missing carriage at every tavern, and whether anyone had been there during the evening. "No," was the answer given, not in the best of humor, for they did not relish being awakened from their first sleep to give such profitless information.

"Well," said Walgrave, "I 'm afraid that we 're on the wrong track; we have already passed three villages and no one has seen them."

"We can't exactly take it that way," said his companion. "We 're only in the middle of the night; and though the public house keepers have neither seen nor heard of the carriage, some one else may; but people are in bed, and we can't wake everybody up. Hark! Here comes a fellow who don't happen to be asleep."

A voice was heard singing, "'We won't go home till morning; we won't go home till morning.' O, what 's making the road so unsteady? How it does shake! I can't walk; I feel as if I was going to fall on my nose every minute; it must be an earthquake that 's coming this way. I 'm half drowned with the rain; I can't even see the moon"—as he tried to look up and very nearly toppled over on his back; "at least the wind must have changed; it 's at my back now."

"We won't get anything out of a fellow so far gone as he is," said Walgrave.

"We can only try," replied the other. "Here, John," he cried; "do you want to earn a bob?"

"Sure I do," replied the drunken man. "How came you to know my name, and what are you up to, and why are you spinning around like two devils? Is it a cyclone or an earthquake coming on us that makes everybody go round like a carrousel, eh, old fellows?"

"Never mind the turning round, my man; you 'll likely be worse by and by, for I should n't wonder if you stood on your head presently."

"You don't say so! Is it going to be so bad as that? Then we 'd better all go in somewhere and have a glass; come along, and we won't go home till morning."

He was walking away when Walgrave said, "Stop a minute and tell us where you got that strong stuff you have in you."

"O, just a little way up," said the man, backing himself

against the wall of a small cottage to steady himself; "just on your right, before you enter the town; it 's a jolly place."

"O, indeed," said Walgrave, "and have you met a carriage on your way from there?"

"Not a shadow of one, but one came to the public while I was there."

"And who was in it?"

"A young fellow and his wife or sweetheart, maybe; they were a jolly pair; that 's all I know."

"Did they have a child with them about eight years old?"

"Why, how you do rush ahead, you fellows! Did n't I say they were young people? The man was about twenty-five and the young woman eighteen or twenty. Now I 'm feeling a little more steady; I think I 'll go home or there 'll be the devil to pay with my wife."

"Here 's your shilling, John," said Walgrave.

"Ah, you keep it; since you know my name you must know that I 'm Squire John Morgan. I only said what I did for fun. Good by. I suppose you have been making fun of me because you thought I had a drop, hey, my trumps? We 're all jolly good fellows, and we won't go home till morning." And he went on his way singing.

"Well, what do you think of the information he gave us? They can't be those we 're looking for."

"No," replied Walgrave, "decidedly not; they would n't stay there to be caught, nor would they be so jolly; still we must see them. They may have met a carriage on their way; that would give us some idea of which way they have gone."

"It 's worth trying;" replied the London detective.

As they had not remained at a standstill they saw a light on their right hand, and above it hung a large sign creaking and moaning as it moved backward and forward in the storm. "That must be the place," said Walgrave. "The Red Lion Hotel" he read on the sign, just above a lion's head which was painted as red as blood.

"Just think of a lion of that color! What ideas some people have, to be sure!" and he knocked on the door with the handle of his whip.

Soon a head was thrust out of a window above the

sign, and a voice called out, "Who be you at this time of night—or morning—I be thinking?"

"We are two travelers who have lost our way in the storm," was the answer. "Can we be accommodated here till morning?"

"Yes, sure, your nonors; I 'll be down before you can count five." And soon after the owner of the head opened the door, and the two detectives followed him into the parlor behind the bar, where a fire was burning brightly.

"Shall I show you to a bedroom, or do you wish for some'at before you turn in?" asked the host.

"We shall not require a bedroom," replied Walgrave; "it 's almost morning; but we 'll have something to eat—cold meat, or bread and cheese, anything you have handy; and a glass of hot brandy and water. But first see to our horses; they can't be left out of doors, you know."

"Sure, sir." And the old man hobbled away.

"Do you intend to stay here till morning?" said the London detective to Walgrave.

"I think we had better," he replied; "it is past three o'clock, and I wish to see that young couple, if possible; and we 're so wet that we 'll catch our death if we don't dry our clothes, and have something hot to drive the cold out. And the fact is I don't know which way to turn; we have no clew. I hope the other two detectives are making better progress than we are, though I would have preferred to make the capture myself, for honor's sake. But it is of no use whatever for us to be running ahead without the slightest clew to guide us. If these young people have met a carriage, and can give us an idea of the way it went, or about where they saw it, we shall have a clew to follow, and will not be working in the dark, as we are now doing."

"You 're right; and since we have lost the clew we had better make ourselves comfortable. Here comes our supper."

Placing their coats on chairs before the fire, they dismissed their host, and, going to the table, engaged the cold leg of mutton and red pickled cabbage, washed down with a glass of hot toddy, and they felt so comfortable

sitting by the hot fire that they were soon in the land of dreams.

Still, neither of them dreamed that the guilty parties were just above their heads, with only the ceiling parting them.

CHAPTER XIV.

GEORGE and Katy had heard the detectives' dialogue, and were making their plans to send them on the wrong track.

"It will never do for me to show myself," said George; "they are so cute, they 'll see through my disguise in the twinkling of an eye. You must manage them, Katy."

"I 'll never be able," said Katy; "they 'll put me in jail."

"How can they? there 's no proof against us. If I were not in disguise I 'd enjoy the trick. Just think, Katy, of the honor of having the English detectives done brown by you," and he laughed merrily, and Katy joined in.

It was after six o'clock, and the detectives still slept. They were awakened by some one coming into the room, laughing merrily. They opened their eyes, not exactly knowing where they were, and saw a young woman not at all bad looking, who said, seemingly in surprise at seeing the two men asleep in their chairs, "O, I beg pardon, I had no notion that the parlor was occupied or used as a bedroom;" and made a motion as if to retire.

The detectives exchanged looks which meant this must be the young woman, and Walgrave hastened to say, "I 'm sorry, madam, if we have startled you. Pray don't go; we 're off ourselves in less than five minutes."

"O, I have no wish to turn you out, and I 'm sorry I woke you. But believing that the room was empty I came to fetch a glass of soda water for my husband." And she laughed again, as if unable to repress her merriment.

"Is your husband ill, madam?"

"O, dear, no; or I would n't be laughing; but—but—well, I don't think I ought to tell."

"I can assure you, madam, that we will not abuse your confidence. What has happened to your husband?" For though the young woman was richly dressed, the detectives

knew that she was not a lady, or they would not have questioned her so.

"Well, gentlemen, we came back late last night. We went to a party, and as we left our friends' house my husband said that he saw stars. And this morning he won't get up; he has a splitting headache; and when he tried to rise he told me that everything was going round and round, and I laughed till I could n't stand, for I never saw him so before; and I come down to get him some soda water to set him right again."

"Nothing better than soda water, madam. I suppose it was a grand party you went to?"

"Well, I can't say that; it was a secret party where only friends were invited. We had received the invitation while we were in town; that is partly the reason we came this way; and we certainly have had lots of fun."

"A secret party? I don't understand," said Walgrave; "and where was it?"

"O, surely you don't expect me to tell you," said Katy, laughing, "or it would no longer be a secret."

"O, it must be raffles," said the London detective, "and, of course, it has to be done secretly."

"I never said so," replied Katy, pretending to look embarrassed.

"O, it 's all right, madam," he said, laughingly; "we sometimes do something in that line ourselves, don't we, Harry?" and he poked Walgrave in the ribs with his finger.

Walgrave laughed and winked at his friend. "Yes, my friend, and don't always see to find our way home, as we did last night, or we would not be here sleeping in our chairs."

"And do you remember the coachman who lost control of his horses? He must have had a swell inside, for the carriage was fine. The poor coachman fell off his perch and the carriage was soon out of sight. Perhaps they were going to your party. Did you perchance meet on your road a runaway carriage?"

"The one we saw that would answer your description had a coachman and was not going very fast. There was a lady and a little girl inside; there may have been a gentleman, too, but we did n't see any."

"How came you to have seen the lady and the little girl, and yet not know if anyone else was in the carriage?"

"Because as they passed us the little girl put her head out of the window, and called out something that we did n't catch, and a lady pulled her back, and we heard the bang of the window closing."

The detectives exchanged looks. "At about what time did you see that carriage, madam?"

"O, well, I can't exactly say. We left here early, and had a good ride; then we turned back to go to our friends' house, and it was on our way there that we met it. They were going toward the railway station. It was dark, and if they had not passed us so close we could not have seen the child at the window, nor the lady. I can't tell how they looked. I know that the horses were not dark, and that the coachman had a cape on. I hope that they are your friends and that your mind is relieved."

"I really believe that it is the same carriage, and I thank you for the information you have given us," replied Walgrave.

"O, you 're welcome," said Katy, good humoredly. "Now I must really be off with my soda water or George will think that I have eloped with some one."

She left the room, laughing merrily, and her laugh could be heard after she had entered her room, and a coarser voice joining with her.

"Well, we have a clew at last. Let us have a mouthful to eat, and be off. I had an appointment for six o'clock at Lord Montgomery's, and we won't be there at eight. We have a long way to go back, and most likely there will be news for us when we get there, for if the occupants of the carriage have gone to the station they will have fallen into the trap and are now safe under lock and key."

After breakfasting they mounted their horses and rode back, passing the station on their way. Stephen was there but had no news of the occupants of the carriage; but he said that word had been sent him by one of the men servants that the carriage and horses had been found in a marshy field just half a mile from Lady Montgomery's farm, and that the carriage was totally ruined and the poor horses nearly drowned, as the carriage had stuck fast in the mud, and that the horses had been unable to draw it

out, or to break the traces, and the more they had kicked and pulled the deeper they had sunk, till only their heads and the two wheels of the carriage were visible, for it had tipped on its side.

"Who found the carriage?" asked Walgrave.

"Detective Mathew, sir."

"And have they found no bodies?"

"They had n't then, but they may have since."

"All right, Stephen, keep on watching here, but I am afraid that it will be of little use. They must have been strangers in these parts, and instead of turning to their right to get out of the lane they must have gone straight on and found themselves in the pond before they knew it. The night was so dark that anyone might do it who did not know that the pond was there."

"But horses have instinct," remarked the London detective, "and would never have gone in willingly. They must have been urged on pretty sharply by the driver."

"You are right there; but be that as it may, I am afraid that they are all drowned, and that beautiful child with them. Let us go to the house and see what is going on there."

When they reached the house they were told that all the men were at the pond, that it was being dragged, and that, so far as they knew, no bodies had been found, and that Lady Montgomery had received such a shock at the news that she had fainted away and had been carried to her room and put to bed. My lord and the doctor were now with her.

"Well, Sarah," said Walgrave, "go and tell Lord Montgomery that I am here and that I should like a word with him if at all possible."

Lord Montgomery came down at once, looking pale and sorrowful, and exclaimed, as he saw the detectives: "Have you any news—I mean good news? My mother is nearly dead with the shock she received this morning, that our beautiful Florence was most likely drowned."

"No, my lord, I have not; still, I don't give up hope; for as no bodies have been found and the pond is not deep, it is possible that the horses really did run away with the carriage, and that the young lady has been taken away in another one, for no sane person would try to go far with

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a carriage like yours. So cheer up, and explain matters to Lady Montgomery. I must see my men, and then will begin the search again. We will find her yet," said Walgrave, with such a determined air that it gave hopes to the captain, who went back to his mother, while the detectives walked toward the farm and soon reached the pond. They saw at a glance that if any of the occupants of the carriage had been drowned their bodies would have been recovered before that time; and supposing there had been people in the carriage they could not have jumped out, in fact, would have been afraid to do so, seeing the water all around them, and not knowing how deep it was; so that they would have been found in the carriage. The doors had not been opened, for they had been found closed, and no one jumping out for life would think of closing the door.

The search was given up in that quarter, and all the detectives drew back some distance to consult as to what had best be done. Walgrave sent three of his men to inquire in every village for thirty miles around. Then, with one of his men, he repaired to a telegraph office and wired to all the surrounding stations, waiting for the answers; but no suspicious looking persons had been seen; no little girl had left by any train; the only child they had seen was a little boy, dirty and ragged, accompanied by his father and grandmother, and he was going with them willingly, having hold of their hands, and they had no appearance of hiding, having sat for more than half an hour on one of the benches. One of the detectives on the watch had spoken to the child, but he seemed shy and half asleep, and had hidden his face in the old woman's shawl and had not answered; so that the old woman had said: "Poor dearie, he 's asleep; we had to wake him up so early, as his mother be dying in London and wants to see her boy before she dies. I only hope that we shall get there in time. We be waitin' for the train this long while; be it never coming? And my poor son is dazed about his poor wife."

The man really did look ill and uneasy. They left by the six o'clock train for London that morning.

When Walgrave received this telegram he danced with rage and used very strong language. "O, the fool, the fool!

It must have been the people who stole the child, and the child herself, I 'll bet my head. And to let them decamp under his very nose! O, Smith, if I had you here I would shake you out of your very skin! I must be off by the next train as soon as I have telegraphed to London; but that will be too late; it is now two o'clock; they reached London hours ago if they went there at all."

"It is my opinion that they have gone there," replied the other detective. "They seem to know their business, whoever they are. What can be their motive? Is it money? If so, it would be well to offer a large reward for the recovery of the child."

"It shall be done," replied Walgrave. "You go back to Lord Montgomery, take him this telegram, and tell him that I am positive that it is the little lady disguised as a boy, and that I have gone to ascertain where they came from, and will telegraph if I have news. Now I 'm off to the station; you can telegraph me at ————, and should I find a clew I will leave word for you at the station."

When Walgrave reached the station he had to wait twenty minutes, which seemed to him twenty hours. He walked about in a perfect fury. So much time lost! O, if he had not slept so long that morning he might yet have caught them by sending a telegram to the London station and have them stopped until he could go and investigate the matter; but now what could he do but walk the platform like a madman while they were escaping and laughing at him. O, that was more than he could bear; he would be disgraced forever. At last here 's the train.

It was a relief to him to get aboard and feel himself going at a furious rate—for it was the express, one of the fastest trains in the world. When he reached his destination he saw Smith watching every train; he called to him and gave him such a volley of abuse that the poor fellow turned pale and had n't a word to say when Walgrave told him that he had allowed the guilty parties to escape right under his very nose. They made inquiries, but no one at the station could tell which way the tramps had come, though the clerk remembered selling the man a two and a half ticket for London. He believed they had come on foot.

The two detectives went through the village asking if

the tramps and their little boy had been seen, and from what road they had entered the village. Many, on their way to their work, had seen them; it must have been in the vicinity of five o'clock; they had entered the village at the west side, on foot, the man carrying the little boy, who seemed asleep or tired. That was all the information they could get. They hired a light one-horse trap and went west in search of a clew. After riding for a good pace for about two miles they saw an old one-horse wagon, seemingly without a driver; the horse was eating the grass along the hedges.

Walgrave alighted, saying, "They came in this wagon, that 's clear."

"Beyond a doubt," answered Smith, "but how shall we find out where it came from? If the horse could only talk now we would be all right."

"O, we will make him talk if he is at all intelligent."

"Well, Mr. Walgrave, I know that you are very clever; still, I don't see how you are going to manage that."

"Indeed," replied Walgrave, "it won't be me that will make him talk, but you, yourself."

Smith looked puzzled and thought that Walgrave must have lost his head; so he made no answer.

"Now, Smith," said Walgrave, "you get down, turn the horse's head to the west, and get into the wagon; hold the reins loosely, and let him show us the way to his home; you can drive at a good pace while the road is straight, but should there be a turning and more than one road, slacken the reins, let him choose his way, and we 'll get there yet or I 'll eat my head."

Smith looked at Walgrave with admiration and said: "O, you beat us all, sir;" and they started off at as rapid a pace as the old horse could be made to go.

"Is William to follow us, sir?"

"No; I left word at the station that he is to replace you there: there will be no train before the one he is in. It is as well to keep watch, though I am afraid it is too late. If we could only find out who stole the child our way would be clear."

CHAPTER XV.

THE old horse kept on his way for five miles, turning sometimes to the right and sometimes to the left; he stopped once to drink at an old fashioned fountain on the roadside, and then went on, and he certainly looked as if he were nearing his home, for he neighed as he passed the fields in which were some cows and a horse. A man was milking a cow, and as he heard the horse neighing he looked up, and hurriedly pushing his milk out of the cow's reach he ran toward the gate. The detectives stopped, for they thought that he must be the owner of the horse and wagon, but he did not look like a man that would be an accessory to kidnappers. They would hear what he had to say, however.

He was out of breath from running, but as soon as he could talk he yelled out: "So you have brought back my horse and wagon. I think you might have asked for the loan of it, and not come in the night and taken it without saying 'by your leave';" and the farmer wiped the perspiration from his forehead with the sleeve of his blue smock frock. He had an honest face, but he was terribly angry. He went on: "Well, my fine fellows, what have you got to say for yourselves? If you think it a nice joke to play, I don't, I'll let you know."

"My good man," began Walgrave, "if you'll only let us put in a word you'll soon know how we came by your horse and wagon, and we are glad that we have found you. This old horse of yours brought us here; we had no idea where he came from; he is a smart old fellow." And they told him how they had found the horse and wagon, and that they were detectives searching for some one who had stolen a child, and must have used his property to do it with; that was as clear as day. But though they questioned the farmer nothing more could be got out of him except that he had missed his horse and wagon early that morning, but at what time it had been taken he could

not tell; he was very glad to get it back. He invited the two detectives into his house and gave them some cider and buckwheat cakes, and also cared for their horse. Then they left to continue their search, sleeping that night at a tavern and searching all the next day, but not the shadow of a clew could they find. And after another day wasted in the same way they went to Lord Montgomery to report that they had been fooled, and were at a loss where to make further search for the child; but they believed she had been taken to London—the worst place to find anyone, there were so many hiding places there—and as they had no idea what kind of people had her they were at a loss to know in what sphere of life to look for them. If they were strollers or circus people there would be no trouble; but should it be an enemy who had done the deed, where were they to look for that enemy unless Lady and Lord Montgomery gave them the clew?

After consultation with detectives, Walgrave arrived at the conclusion that it was the work of an enemy, and a clever one, who must have means to pay high prices to those employed in the work, and the tramps were no ordinary people. After reaching this conclusion he called on Lord Montgomery and asked him to put them on the track of this enemy if he wished to find his cousin; otherwise they were at a standstill and only wasting time, working in the dark as they had been doing during the past week. Lord Montgomery consulted his mother and she agreed with Walgrave; she thought that he was right, and must be a clever man to have discovered as much; and that though it was most unpleasant to have to expose Miss Hogg's conduct, it would have to be done; that she would tell Walgrave herself; it would come with a better grace from her than from her son.

So Walgrave was sent for and received in my lady's boudoir. She told him everything, from beginning to end; he was asked to keep the matter secret and he had promised to do so. He had left Lady Montgomery's boudoir without a smile on his face, saying to himself, "O, Miss Hogg, I shall soon have you under my thumb, my fine American, you want to force a lord to marry you! Why, it 's a detective you ought to marry; you 'd be a great

help to him, for you 're clever, I must admit, but I 'll be a match for you now that I know my way." And he rubbed his hands in anticipation of the delight he would feel when he faced her with the proof of her deed.

So he went to London in search of Miss Hogg after a week wasted in the country searching for tramps. "O, why did n't they tell me this before?"

CHAPTER XVI.

LEAVING Walgrave on his new tack, we will return to Miss Hogg in the lane where she had backed the carriage so as not to be seen by the horseman, who was no other than Lord Montgomery on his way to the station, as we have previously recorded.

As soon as the horseman could no longer be heard she mounted the box, and, crossing the high road, she struck another lane which she thought would take her to the field where she had left Jerry the poacher; but she soon saw her mistake, and realized that she had lost her way and that she was going toward Lady Montgomery's mansion; and to add to her trouble she heard a carriage coming towards her. What could she do? She could not back out of the lane; she must stay there and be caught like a rat in a trap. No, she would make one more effort; so she got down, and opening the carriage door she shook Katy, who awoke with a start.

"What is it, Mamie?"

"Come, jump out and take the child; don't ask questions, but make haste;" and she half dragged her out of the carriage, and taking the sleeping child she managed to get over the hedge, where Katy soon followed her and sat down. Mamie handed her the child, saying, "Keep still; a carriage is coming, and I must find out who is in it, if possible."

She peeped over the hedge anxiously and tried to pierce the darkness, but could only make out something dark coming along at a slow pace as if afraid of being heard. It could not be their pursuers for they would n't hide. Who could it be? O, if it could only be Jerry what a blessing it would be! He could yet save them. It was too good to be true, but she would soon know now, and she watched and waited anxiously, for she was in a very unpleasant predicament. If it was not Jerry she would have to abandon the child, and she and Katy would make their way back as best they could to the tavern, inventing some story for returning on foot instead of in the cab.

All these things passed through her mind in less than a minute; but she listened, for the carriage had stopped.

"Hello!" said a man's voice in a whisper, "what stops you?" He had jumped down to ascertain why his horses had stopped and could n't be made to go a step further.

"Why, it 's the runaway carriage, by Jingo! It did run away, after all. My gent had nothing to do with it, but where did he vanish to?"

Miss Hogg, or George, as we shall continue to call her, was greatly relieved when she found that it was Jerry the poacher, and a plan entered her head at once. She must use him; he was the man to do anything for money, and, situated as she was, she could not get on without help; so she went out into the road and said, "O, there you are at last; I have been hunting for you till I have lost my way. Why did n't you stay in the field and wait for me, eh, fellow?"

"Well, sir, I 'm powerful glad to meet you! I thought you had run away; and as the two men were hurt and their carriage gone, I could not leave them there to die; so I put them in my cab and I 've just left them at the lodge and was going back through these here lanes to the field to see if you had turned up; and now I find you here and the carriage too, ha, ha! But I ain't no fool and you 'd better trust Jerry, and if you 've a little job on hand that will pay he 's the man to do it."

"Well, I believe you 're right; let us waste no time. Get rid of this carriage in some way, and manage it so that it won't get back home for some hours yet; and then take us to some hut, or to your house, if you have one, where I can leave my little girl for a few hours; my wife is here with her."

"Yes, sir; I can take you to my mother's; it 's a poor place, but you 're welcome to leave the child with her."

"Well, hurry and get rid of that carriage."

Jerry backed the horses as far as the turn in the lane, and heading them towards the pond, he gave them a cut with his whip. They, not being used to such cruel treatment, had rushed into the pond and stuck where they were found by detective Mathew, as we have seen. He then returned to George, who had during his short absence

got Katy and the child into the cab, so that Jerry did not see who the child really was.

"Now make haste, Jerry, to your mother's, and you 'll be well paid."

They soon reached the place, a small cottage about a mile from the village. It stood alone, a short distance from the road, more properly called the lane. Few except farmers who had fields beyond passed that way. A high hedge inclosed the little garden. The gate was made of old pieces of wood tied together with willow, and fastened with a large wooden button.

It being well known that widow Jerry's son was a poacher, no one cared to visit there. He and his mother might lie dead in the cottage for a month, and no one be the wiser; so that Miss Hogg could not have secured a better place to enable her to carry out her plans. She and Katy had not been idle during their ride to the widow Jerry 's, as the appearance of Lady Florence showed.

When Jerry arrived at his own gate he gave a whistle which was well understood by his mother, who came running to the gate, and was very much surprised to see a cab there and her son helping out a gentleman, a lady, and a large bundle. "Now open the gate, mother, and be quick about it, and mind you be as dumb as a mule."

Jerry tied his horses to the gate pillar and followed the company into the house. The widow had bolted the door as soon as all were in, and closed the shutters tightly; she then looked at the people her son had brought in. She was surprised, for she had expected to see some poacher like her son running away from the gamekeepers; instead of that, however, she saw a tall, dark gentleman, a stout, fair little woman with a laughing face, and a little girl with short hair the color of gold. The latter personage had been brought in as a bundle.

"Now, Jerry," said the gentleman, "can your mother be trusted with a secret?"

"Yes, sir, my mother is a wonderful woman, and a clever one besides."

"Very well; now I wish you to obey me without questioning or prying into my affairs; can you both do that? You shall be well paid."

"Yes, I promise for my mother and myself too."

"Well, try to understand what I am going to say to you, for time presses. I want this child disguised as a boy; if possible, ragged, dirty—in fact, so that she could not be recognized even if her nurse met her."

"I can easily do that," said the widow; "I still have some of the clothes Jerry wore when he was a boy, and we can dirty them in no time."

"That will do," said George. "Now can you manage to go to London by the first train, by six o'clock to-morrow morning? Not this station, but one far away from here —secretly. I warn you that there will be detectives everywhere. You must not leave any clew behind you. Here is an address where you can go when you reach London—No. 15 Burr Street; it is a retired street, just back of St. Catherine's Docks; and should you be followed there, try to escape, and go to No. 10 Lemon Street, Whitechapel, and from there wherever you can; I leave it to you; but don't be taken. Here is one hundred pounds for your expenses. I will join you at either place; and if you should have to move come every night at eleven o'clock to the corner of Lemon Street and Whitechapel and I will meet you there. Be as ragged as you possibly can, but when you reach London look a little more respectable or they would not take you in. Don't hide when you 're at the station, but go openly; you are the little boy's father and you have come to fetch him to see his mother, who is dying in London. You are, of course, in great sorrow, which will seem natural, and it will help to hide your fears. Your mother must do the talking, if possible, but do not, either of you, talk too much."

"I understand," said Jerry. "But if the child should begin to talk we are lost."

"The child won't talk, she is stupefied with drugs and she won't feel right for a few days. Do you think you can manage that for me? If everything turns out right I will give you employment as well as a large sum of money."

"That we will," they both replied, "and enjoy the fun of fooling the detectives. I 'm as cunning as the very devil; I 've been so used to hiding and I never have been taken yet. I don't steal, but I poach."

CHAPTER XVII.

During this dialogue the old woman and Katy had been dressing the child and smearing her face. They put on her boy's cap with flaps, tied under the chin. No one would have recognized the daintily dressed Lady Florence. She had a far-away look in her eyes which might have passed for drowsiness. "She 'll do," said George.

The old woman had also dressed herself in a very decent black dress, with an old dirty, ragged one over it; an old shawl and not over-clean sunbonnet completed her costume. Then, making a bundle of a few little things, she declared herself ready. Jerry had also disguised himself.

"Now, sir," he said, addressing George, "my plans are made, and you won't be disappointed in us. You and your lady stay here, and my mother and I are going to take the child to a station ten miles away from here. I will leave her half way with my mother, come back here and take you both to your tavern, so that you can't be suspected; then I will go back to my mother somehow, even if I have to walk it. I can do it in time. Then I 'll borrow, without leave, some kind of wagon, and go by the lanes till I get near the village; then we will leave the horse and wagon to return home the best way they can. I 'll carry the child and my mother the parcel, and no one will suspect us."

"That 's right, Jerry; why, you 're a trump, and just the man for me," said George, overjoyed to have found such people to help him, for he was lost without them.

"Now let 's be off. Have you put some food in the parcel, mother?"

"Yes, my son, plenty."

"Well, come along;" and he took the child in his arms and carried her to the cab.

The old woman whispered to Katy, "You had better blow the light out, and if you hear a noise don't open;

don't make a noise; they 'll think we 're all out;" and she followed her son.

George and Katy were alone for nearly two hours. They bolted the door, blew out the light, settled themselves, each in an old armchair, and were soon asleep, for they were both very tired; the anxiety and fatigue they had undergone had been terrible—Miss Hogg in particular. How long they had slept they could n't tell when they were awakened by men's voices.

"Who lives in this hut?"

"Only Jerry and his mother, but they don't seem to be in; everything is dark; I have knocked twice; I suppose Jerry is out poaching, and his mother may be gone to town to sell the product of his work, for they are night birds and are not seen in the daytime."

"Well, give another rap and don't waste time;" and two or three kicks were heard against the door.

Katy got closer to Miss Hogg and whispered, "They 'll knock the door down." Miss Hogg shook her to keep her quiet.

"If you want to search the house I 'll bust the door in," said the man who had kicked so violently.

The two women listened in fear and trembling for the answer, for should they break in there was no escape for them. Katy whispered that she felt as if she was going to scream.

"You 'd better not," whispered back Miss Hogg, "or I 'll choke you."

The men outside seemed to be deliberating. "I hardly think it would be any use," replied the other. "Whoever took the child is far away by this time; they would never have come to this hut, so we had better go back." And to the great relief of the women inside, they heard their footsteps die away and they began to breathe again. But they were not yet safe. Should these two men—Mathew the detective and John the footman—happen to meet Jerry how would they, the women, find their way to the tavern on foot? and it was beginning to rain torrents. If revenge is sweet they had yet to find it out, for so far it had been very bitter, and hard work. But it was too late to draw back, and Miss Hogg, though she said very little, wished herself well out of it.

They tried to settle themselves in their chairs again, but they found it impossible to sleep; and the time seemed so long sitting there in the dark waiting for Jerry. Would he never come? Had he been arrested on his way there? If so, the child was rescued, and soon the police would come and make them prisoners—or was it in coming back? They might yet escape, but their plan would have miscarried. What could the old woman do? She must, of course, wait for her son wherever he had left her, and she would be caught too. All these unpleasant thoughts passed through their minds.

But hark! What's that? Carriage wheels at last! But is it Jerry? They must make sure before opening the door. Yes, it is he; they hear his whistle. O, what a relief! what a weight off their minds!

They opened the door and Jerry came in, put on his green coat and whispered, "Come, everything is all right." They followed him, and, locking the door, he remounted the box, and they hurried away toward the tavern. The storm was at its height.

At about this same time Walgrave was examining the fields where Harrison and the coachman said they had been clubbed, but the poacher reached the tavern long before Walgrave for he knew all the short cuts. After leaving George and his wife at the tavern, he drove to the stable where the cab had been hired and hurried to his mother, whom he had left in an old stable or cow-shed not far from where he had "borrowed" the wagon. Then, after eating something and feeding the child, who seemed to be recovering, they told her that they were going to take her back home, but that she must not answer anyone who might speak to her, for bad people who had run away with her would take her away again; and, as she knew Jerry the poacher, she believed what they told her. So she allowed Jerry to lift her into the wagon; the old woman cuddled her up very kindly and she slept again; she seemed unable to keep her eyes open, and she was really asleep when they left the wagon and Jerry carried her to the station, as we have previously recorded.

CHAPTER XVIII.

When Katy entered the room with the soda water, laughing merrily, she said, "Here, my dear husband, drink this, it will do you good. I saw two gentlemen downstairs who recommended soda water as a sure cure; they speak from experience," and she presented the glass to George.

He playfully took it and emptied it in the wash basin, saying, "The sight of it has cured me, so I have no need to drink it." He began to dress, Katy helping him like a dutiful wife, and they were soon ready to go downstairs, but they wanted the detectives to leave first; and they soon had the pleasure of seeing them mount their horses and depart.

"Now," said George, "let's have breakfast and decamp, for it's hard to tell what is going to happen if they should catch Jerry. They would soon come back here; and then it would not be soda water they would recommend to cure me. They would soon make a widow of you;" and they went down arm in arm, joking.

The tavern keeper thought he had never seen such a happy couple, and that his soda water must have great merit, for certainly the gentleman looked all right; and he felt sorry when he was told that they intended to leave after breakfast, and said so.

"Well," said Katy, "we are on our wedding tour, you know, and we want to see as many places as we can during my husband's two weeks leave."

"To be sure, to be sure," replied the old man, "and a merry couple you be; it makes my old heart young again, for I was a jolly chap once, though it be many years back now."

At about noon, George, carrying his portmanteau, left the tavern with Katy. He dare not make her carry it. Katy was greatly amused at the face he was making over it, but it was not very far to the station, and they left for London without having been suspected. They saw a fellow who looked like a detective, and Katy went up to him and asked him the time, while George went for

the ticket, and she was flirting desperately with him when George came on the platform; he frowned darkly at her and she winked at the detective and hurried to her husband as sedate as a nun. The detective turned away murmuring, "Well, really, we see all kinds; that's never his wife, I 'll bet my head." George and Katy had to pass him again to reach the train, but George never deigned to give him a look; in fact, he turned his head proudly away. But Katy, on the contrary, smiled at him and made a face toward her husband, which the detective seemed to enjoy, and he smiled at her in return.

At last the train started, to the great relief of them both. Certainly Katy had played her cards very well by attracting the detective's attention to herself, for she was not disguised; there was nothing very remarkable about her—a little overdressed, perhaps, for a person of her style, but that was nothing unusual; such young women are seen every day in all countries.

Had the detective not been such a gay spark, so fond of pretty girls, and had he been attending to his business, he could not have failed to see through George's disguise, though he was well made-up. Still, a detective has sharp eyes when he chooses to use them; but he was taken off his guard; he had been looking for some one who would try to sneak away, not come openly and actually make sheep's eyes at him, as Katy had been doing. He stood on the platform looking complacently at the train that was carrying away the people that he had been expected to capture. Katy put her head out of the window, and seeing him there, actually waved her handkerchief at him.

"Come, sit down," said George, "you will overdo it; we 're not out of danger yet; we may be stopped at the end of our journey; we don't know if Jerry has arrived safe. I long to be in London, and yet I 'm afraid. If we get safe out of this train we can defy the detectives with the Jerrys to help us. He knows London as well as his pocket. How lucky we were to meet that saucy cabby again! It was he who told me of the place in Burr street and Lemon street. I wrote it down for Jerry, for the poor fellow writes badly. I don't know where Burr street is myself except that it is west, and not far from the Tower of London and the Mint, but the cabman will know."

"Yes, my dear George," Katy replied, "but why do you take so much trouble to run away with a child? It is beyond me. If it was with the young lord I could understand it, and to me it would be a great deal more sensible."

"Now, you just shut up, Katy, you 're too fresh," said George, angrily. "I do what I like, and you have only to obey."

"O, don't get angry; you have no idea how I shall miss my husband when we get back to your mother;" and she laughed heartily.

They were alone in a first class carriage—they had been so far, at least. "Look here," said George, "suppose that the detective we left behind should have his eyes opened by some telegram sent from London or elsewhere, we shall be caught, for he will wire back a description of us both. If I thought there would be time enough I would make a change in my appearance."

"You have if we hurry," said Katy, unstrapping the portmanteau and getting out a petticoat, a skirt, a jacket, and a soft felt hat with a thick veil. "Now quick; just take off your coat and vest; you will have to put on the skirt over your trousers, and be quick."

Katy grabbed the hat and mustaches, while George was taking off his coat and vest, which Katy hurriedly shoved into the portmanteau. She helped him to dress, tying the thick veil over his face. Then she strapped the portmanteau and sat down pale and trembling, for the train was slowing up and they soon ran into a station.

"Let 's get down," said Miss Hogg, as we shall call her again; "I have tickets for the second class; we shall be safer there in case they are searching for us."

They got off the car just as an old gentleman and his daughter were getting into the carriage that they were leaving. They got into a crowded car and no one noticed them. The guard called for the tickets, which Miss Hogg gave fearlessly. Katy had wrapped herself up in a traveling cloak which hid much of her finery, and settled herself to sleep in a corner.

When they arrived at Paddington Station it was getting dark, every one hurrying, pushing, and shoving to get away; some leaving the station on foot, others in cabs,

Katy, carrying the portmanteau, signaled to a cabby, who, taking the portmanteau, put it into the cab, and would have hurried her in, but she said, "Wait a moment; what 's up down there; is it an accident?"

"No, mum," he answered in a whisper; "it be two detectives; they have caught that old gent and young lady who is crying."

"Some do say that they 've stolen that child that such a large reward has been offered for," remarked another cabby.

"Poor old fellow, he don't look like a thief," said Miss Hogg. "But let 's go."

They got in the cab, and once more they had escaped the detectives.

Had Miss Hogg remained in her disguise she and Katy would have fallen into the detectives' hands.

It was through Mathew that this arrest had been made. While Walgrave had gone to find out about the tramps and had found the old wagon we have already seen, Mathew had not been idle; he had visited all the surrounding taverns and livery stables, and was so far rewarded as to find the cabman who had brought George and Katy to the park. He related how they had got out and ordered him to wait in the lane for them, and he had done so, but that they had been away so long that he had gone to sleep and had only awakened when they had ordered him to drive on. They had boarded the carriage unperceived by him.

"Did they have a child with them?"

"No; leastways I never saw nor heard any. They made one stop in a lane near the high road leading to the railway station, and they kept me there so long that I got tired of waiting and got off my box to tell them so, when I found the door of my cab open and the cab empty; how long it had been so I can't tell; and the lap rug gone; yes, gone! That 's all I know. They had paid for the cab in advance, still, I lose the rug. My belief is that they got into the other cab."

"What other cab?" asked Mathew.

"Why, the one with two men who pretended to be looking for another carriage, and, after stopping for two

minutes, turned back and drove away the way they had come."

"O," thought Mathew, "that must have been Harrison and the coachman. And to think that they were so near the guilty parties and yet missed them!"

"How did they look—the parties in your cab, I mean?"

"O, I can hardly tell, except that the man was tall and dark, and the woman short and fair, with a merry eye. They were both young."

"How strange, how strange!" murmured Mathew. "If Walgrave were not so clever I would say that the young woman he saw at the Red Lion was the very same, by the description he gave of her; she had really very good cause to laugh, for she was taking in one of the cleverest in our force, if it be she."

"Now, cabby, a good horse to your cab! I want to go to the Red Lion."

"All right, sir; but as I don't know vou I hope you 'll pay me in advance."

"All right; here 's your money," and Mathew was soon on his way.

They had to pass through the lane where Jerry lived, and as they neared the gate they saw something black, or at least very dark, on the ground; it might be a large dog, or a deer. The cabman, not wanting to ride over it, whatever it was, got down, and then called out, "Why, this is my rug! How did it get here?"

Mathew jumped out of the cab in a moment. "Yes, that is certainly a rug; they must have passed this way. Who lives here?"

"Jerry the poacher."

"O, of course; I was there last night with John, the footman. Wait a moment. I must see if anyone is at home."

So saying, he opened the gate and walked up to the cottage, knocked several times to no purpose, tried the door, and, to his surprise, it opened; he examined it and saw that whoever had locked it must have, in his hurry, turned the key before it was quite closed, so that the door was really not fastened. He walked in and the first thing that met his eyes were a dainty white dress, lace petticoats,

and a crush hat with pink roses. Yes, the child had been there. Taking the clothes, he put them into the cab.

"Run, my man, as fast as you can, to the Red Lion." He jumped into the cab, smiling to himself.

"I 'm on the right tack; if I can only get there before they leave I 'll give them soda water! Whatever made them stay there and face the detectives? I wonder if they had the child with them; but no; that would be too good. It must be that Jerry and his mother who have charge of it; they are the tramps, and are employed by the other parties whoever they may be."

"Go ahead, my man; go ahead."

The man whipped up his horses and they soon reached the Red Lion. After hearing from the tavern keeper that the lady and gentleman had just left for the railway station they hurried in that direction. Arriving there, Mathew questioned the detective on the platform, and learned that two such persons had left an hour ago.

"And you have allowed them to escape? They are the parties we want. What were you about to allow them to slip through your fingers in such a clumsy manner? for they must have looked suspicious in some way."

The detective knew that he had neglected his duty; and to think that that very young woman had taken him in, and that the husband's angry looks were all feigned. He rushed to the telegraph office and wired to every station, but they had already passed, except the Paddington Station, where we saw the detectives arresting the old gentleman who had been found with his daughter in the first class carriage. True, he was not a young man, as had been described to them, but perhaps he wore a disguise; no one else answered the description better than they did, so they were arrested, taken to the station, and accused of abducting a child.

The old gentleman was very indignant; he gave his card to the captain, who read "Lord Frankford."

The captain turned pale, for he knew Lord Frankford by name and reputation, and it was no joke to have arrested him. Still, he must do his duty. He said, "My lord, I believe you, but you understand that I am very painfully situated. I do not know you personally, and were I to let you go without more proof than your card,

and it should turn out that you are not Lord Frankford I would lose my place as captain of police; so I propose that you and the young lady remain here in my office and you can notify your friends through one of my men."

"Very well," said his lordship, "I see that you are right;" and he wrote a message to his son on the back of one of his cards. The son arrived in great haste and very angry at the detectives for having made such a mistake. The captain trembled for the consequences, and as soon as the party had left he sent for his detectives and rated them soundly for arresting a lord and his daughter for abducting a child. What had the force come to?—some allowing the guilty parties to escape right under their eyes, and others arresting a lord for the guilty party.

Lord Frankford did not make any trouble for the detectives. He had great sympathy for Lady Montgomery, whom he knew, when he heard of the loss of the beautiful little girl who spoke French so fluently, and whom he had so often admired during her stay in London.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE cabby was ordered to take Miss Hogg and her servant to a coffee shop not too near the station, which he did, and left them. He had seen nothing remarkable about them and soon forgot them. Miss Hogg and Katy had a good substantial tea; then, carrying the portmanteau, they walked a few blocks; they then called a cab and were taken to Richmond, only a short distance away, alighted a little way from their lodging, mounted the steps of a house, pretended to ring the bell, and stood there until the cabman had turned the corner; then ran down the steps and walked to their lodging. It being late, the house was dark; but Miss Hogg had her latchkey with her, so they got in quietly; taking a candle from a shelf where they were always kept in the hall, they crept upstairs without having met anyone. They were glad to get home again and soon retired, Katy going to her own room.

Mrs. Hogg was greatly surprised the next morning to see her daughter walk into the breakfast room as if she had never left the house. "What time did you get back, dear?" she asked.

Miss Hogg, not knowing how long her mother had remained up, did n't dare fix the hour, so she answered, "O, it was quite late, ma; I had my latchkey and we got in without disturbing anyone."

"But you had no supper, Mamie."

"Sure, we had, at a restaurant near by."

"How did you enjoy yourself in Liverpool with our friends—have they returned to New York yet?"

"O, it was jolly; we had lots of fun; they sent compliments and were very sorry that you could n't be there. I 'm awfully tired, do you know? But where 's Isabelle?"

"There she is in the doorway, looking at you, my dear; is n't she lovely?"

"Yes, she has certainly changed for the better; what a beautiful curly head she has! Come here, Isabelle, and kiss me."

The child went to her, and throwing her arms round her neck, kissed her softly, raising her beautiful blue eyes to Miss Hogg's dark ones. She was richly dressed in white cambric and lace with blue sash and shoulder ribbons.

"O, you 'll do, you little dear," said Miss Hogg, taking her in her lap, looking at her with interest and thinking to herself she might easily be taken by a stranger for Lady Florence. "She 's fair, she 's lovely, golden hair —cut short, it 's true, but Lady Florence 's is cut short now. I had to do it, though it was a pity; it hung below her waist."

"Well, Mamie, I never thought you were so fond of children; you seem to have taken quite a liking to Isabelle. She is really a good child; I don't know what I would do without her, my daughter, for, without blaming you, you are so often out that I feel quite lonely."

"I 'm glad she makes you so happy, ma, and I do like her myself. Now, little one," putting the child down, "I promised you a fine doll and you shall have it to-night; you can take her to bed with you; she has plenty of clothes and you can dress and undress her to your heart's content."

Breakfast was brought up and the three sat down to it, Isabelle sitting between them and acting like a little lady, as she must really have been, for blood will tell.

That afternoon Miss Hogg and Katy went to London by the underground railway, and purchased an outfit for a girl of eight years and two dolls with their outfits. Then Katy was sent back to Richmond with one of the dolls and a message to Mrs. Hogg to the effect that Miss Hogg would remain at the Temperance Hotel with some American friends, and would be pleased if she would bring Isabelle and join her there; it must be lonely for her and the child at Richmond.

As soon as Katy had left, Miss Hogg took a cab and soon reached Burr street with her parcel. Dismissing the cab at a short distance from the house where she hoped to find Jerry, she carried her parcel to the door and knocked with a large knocker, for there was no bell on the old fashioned house. Jerry, who was on the look-out, came and opened the door, and taking the parcel from

Miss Hogg, whom he mistook for Katy in the dark, for he had no idea that George was a woman, he walked upstairs, Miss Hogg following. When they entered the lighted room he nearly dropped the parcel when he saw a strange lady standing before him; he thought he had been betrayed.

"O, make your mind easy," said Miss Hogg, closing the door; "I am the gentleman who has employed you;" and she laughed merrily at the astonished look on Jerry's face.

"I thought as much," said Mrs. Jerry; "I knew the voice."

"Well, sir—mum—I mean, here be the little boy, and I 'm glad you 've come; she still seems dazed and keeps on asking when we 're going to take her to her aunt, Lady Montgomery, and why we have dressed her in boy's clothes, and such ugly ones too."

"I have brought her some clothes and a doll here in this parcel. But why did n't you put on her own clothes as soon as you got here?"

"Her own clothes, mum, her own clothes! O, we 're lost! I left them on a chair at our cottage."

"Mother, surely, you so clever, never did that?"

"But I did; and when we go back we 'll be hanged as sure as my name's widow Jerry. I 'll never dare go back to my cottage again."

"Nor I," said Jerry; "I ought to have seen to it that we left no trace behind; but it 's too late now, so let 's attend to this business here or we 'll soon be worse off, I 'm thinking. I wish I could change my face a little, for if the police should visit our cottage—and they will when they don't see us about, if they have n't already done it—they 'll find the clothes and be after us like wild fire."

"You 're right," said Miss Hogg; "you had better cut that long beard off; leave a mustache; that will change your appearance wonderfully; but don't do it in the house. Go to a barber's to-morrow, and instead of coming back here go to the west side of London and find lodgings, not too far from Southampton Road, but retired; then write to your mother to join you there; or it would be best to meet her on the way, and buy her a front-piece of red hair that will change her appearance also, and she must

manage to put it on on the way to your new lodging. Do you understand?"

"Yes, mum; but you be clever, and no mistake."

"Well, you see, Jerry, it is too far for me to come here; I would be sure to be seen on the way. I want you to be nearer, where I can slip in day or night, without risk."

"Well, mum, what do you say to near the Strand in a side street? No one would look for us there. If I can find rooms somewhere about there, what do you say, mum?"

"Well, you see, Jerry, I don't know much about London except where a certain cabman took me; he showed me this house and No. 10 Lemon street, and I have been to Drury Lane Theater and was surprised to find that it was in a common lane. Still I don't think it will suit me; too many people go there and there are no nice lodgings, and if you take rooms among low people, with a child, you 'll be found out in no time; so that won't do. We 'd better not hide, but take furnished rooms in a quiet, respectable, private house, and never mind the price. Dress yourself like a servant belonging to a rich family, and your mother as a nurse to the young lady; and you can represent the child as belonging to a rich American family; she has been ill and requires rest and quiet; and that her family will visit her now and then and take her out for a ride. Try to get where there are no other lodgers, for they would be sure to pry into your affairs. Do you fully understand me?"

"Yes, mum," answered Jerry; "I 'll go at once."

"No, there 's no hurry; to-morrow let your mother go out and buy what is wanted for herself; then, the next day, or even the day after that will do. Don't show any haste; arrange everything so that you will not have to return to this house; no one here must see you in your new disguise. Then look for lodgings; pay one week in advance so that they may not ask for references; then drop me a note telling me where I can meet you, and don't let it be too far from my hotel; and whatever you do don't put the number of your new lodgings in it."

"I understand, mum, and I 'll do as you say."

"And so will I," said the old woman, "as long as you tell me that no harm is intended to the child. I mean no

offense, ma'am, but as I don't understand this business I must know before I go into it any deeper."

"O, no harm will be done to the child; in fact, you will be with her most of the time, and if you must know—you may as well be told—you are in it too deep to draw back now. It is this: Lady Montgomery has deeply insulted me and I am revenging myself on her by taking her niece away, for a time only, but she will be well cared for if you can be trusted to do it."

"Thank you, ma'am; I see my way now, and will help you, as I can't very well help myself now that I dare n't go back to my cottage; and I will certainly be kind to the little lady. But would n't it be best to change her name? I know that we can't make her believe that Lady Florence is n't her name, but we can make her understand that there would be danger in telling anyone. She is only eight years old; she will believe us when she sees how kind we are to her."

"I meant to do it. You will call her Miss Isabelle de Courtney. Now I think I have told you all you need know. Write to Miss Hogg, Temperance Hotel, Southampton Road, when you are quite ready. Now, Jerry, unpack this parcel."

Jerry hastened to obey, and Mrs. Jerry was surprised at the richness of the garments for the child. Miss Hogg presented the doll to Lady Florence, who still looked dazed; but when she saw the lovely doll she smiled at Miss Hogg, who kissed her, and murmured, "I could never hurt her; I 'm almost sorry I took her away; but it 's too late to draw back now."

Turning to Mrs. Jerry, she said, "Perhaps it would be wiser not to put those clothes on her until you are ready to leave this place; it would n't do for the people of this house to see her so richly dressed. Have they seen her yet?"

"Only once, as we came in, and it was dark then. Still, they believe her to be a boy, for the landlady remarked, as she showed us the rooms, 'The poor little boy is tired.' 'Yes, ma'am,' I said, 'he is asleep, the poor deary; we came to town in a market wagon and he 's nearly shook to pieces.' 'O, you come from the country?' she said. 'Yes, ma'am, from Kent; we 've been picking hops there.' "

"Well, then, under the circumstances it will be best not to change her clothes until you leave this house; and then wrap her up well in a shawl so that they won't see the change; and don't leave anything behind this time."

"O, I 'll see to that, mum," replied Jerry.

"Now give the child that box of candies."

"Box of what, mum?"

"Candies, you stupid! or sweets, as you call them here."

"O, yes, mum, I see."

The little lady took the box of sweets, thanked Miss Hogg for them and the doll, and asked, "When shall I see my dear aunt and cousin, madam?"

"O, very soon, my dear; but you see there are bad people who want to take you away and make a gypsy of you; and as soon as they have gone away I 'll take you back to your aunt. We are going to call you Miss Isabelle de Courtney so that they may not find you out; so you must not tell anyone your real name; do you understand that?"

"Yes; but my head hurts me so much. I want to sleep." And she dozed off again.

"You will have to give her some medicine, Mrs. Jerry; I 'm afraid she 's been drugged too much. Now I 'm off. Good night."

Jerry went to the door with her, then went back to his mother and said: "Well, this is a funny business; I 'm almost sorry that we 've had anything to do with it, for you see as the child 's with us, if we 're taken we 'll be terribly punished, and Miss Hogg will escape scot-free, for of course she 'll deny everything, and what proof have we against her? Not that I care much for Lord and Lady Montgomery, for they have had me hunted like a hound for the few rabbits and hares that I 've caught on their grounds. That Harrison has often shot at me; it 's a wonder that I 'm still alive. And yet I never did steal, for I don't call poaching stealing. Not long ago I heard Lord Montgomery tell Harrison that he must look sharper after the poachers as the game was getting scarce. I was hiding in the bushes, lying flat on my stomach. I dared not move for fear of being seen. Well, what I want to tell you is about this here lady. Before Harrison could answer a cab drove up to the gate and a lady jumped out; and the

way she rushed to Lord Montgomery, holding out her two hands to him, showed plainly that she was in love with him."

"And was he in love with her?"

"No, he did n't even take her hand; he had his hat in one hand and his stick in the other. This lady that I recognized to-night is the same one, though I did n't know her, or even suspect her, when she was disguised as a man; but now I see through her as through a pane of glass. She has been slighted by Lord and Lady Montgomery and she wants to revenge herself, and she has caught us in her net so that we can't get out of it, so we must go ahead; but, as there is great risk, she will have to pay a good price."

"I believe she 's willing to do so," replied his mother, "and I 'm glad that we 're not working in the dark. She 's a dangerous woman, for she has plenty of money, and she 's very clever, that she is, and she has no scruples. Those Americans, most of them, leastways, are brought up to all kinds of trickery and stops at nothing, they are so brazen. Lots of those American girls come here husband-hunting; there 's no shyness about them; they 're always talking of their money. I heard Major Dawson talking and joking about them with Colonel Pierson the other day, without mercy."

"Well, my boy, I believe you 're right about this lady; but take my advice, and don't let her see that you know the secret, or we shall be the next ones to suffer. If she was to drop us now what would become of us? We can't go back home, you know."

"True, mother, we have to go on if it takes us to the gallows."

"Not quite so bad; we did n't take the child, though we could n't prove that; and I 'm going to watch over her and see that she don't get hurt; and, to tell you the truth, I don't think she means to harm her."

"No, mother, I don't think so either. I believe she has taken it into her head that Lord Montgomery will come to terms with her for the sake of his cousin. He will never do it; we don't do business that way here; she 'll get into trouble herself. However, since we 're in it we must work with a will and outwit the detectives. I must say that we 're working for a clever woman; there 's some

encouragement in that. She plans like a detective, that she does; and you 're right, mother, we 're in the same boat with her and we 'll sink or swim together. You 'd better see to-morrow about getting a good outfit for yourself."

"O, there 's no hurry, deary; I 'm very tired with traveling and the excitement; I 'll rest to-morrow, and the next day I 'll see about it."

"All right, mother; but if I was you I 'd strike while the iron 's hot. A day may change things for us."

"You heard Miss Hogg say that you were not to hurry?"

"Yes; still, I don't feel easy about losing a day."

CHAPTER XX.

We left Walgrave returning to London after having wasted his time searching for the tramps and their boy. He arrived in London the very day that Mrs. Jerry went out to purchase her outfit. He learned that Lord Frankford and his daughter had been arrested, and that the culprits had escaped. Mathew had come down and gone back again, looking very wise, and had left no word of what he was about; he was a clever man; in fact he had found out more than Walgrave had.

When Walgrave had learned that the woman at the Red Lion had taken him in, his anger knew no bounds; he almost choked with rage; he who had never failed before, and whose name was the first on the list of clever detectives! Why, if this went on he would lose his record of twenty years of hard work, experience, and fame. And to think that he had been done brown by that jade with her soda water, her merry eyes, reddish hair, and mouthful of stories about carriage, little girl, and lady! No wonder she had laughed so merrily to see him swallow all her trash! Most likely she knew him, and had come downstairs to play him the trick of sending him on a wrong track. And how she had fooled the detective on the platform! She seemed to be the chief mover. What 's the matter with the *man?* That 's where the secret lies, and I must get at the root of it. I 'd know the girl anywhere, I 'd bet my head."

It was well for him that no one was there to take his bet seriously, or he would soon have lost that clever head of his. He reflected that it would be best to find out at what station the tramps and their boy had arrived in London, for they had the child with them and they could n't slip through his fingers as easily as the dark gentleman and his wife had done. "Wife indeed, the jade! O, my lady, your time will come yet! You won't catch Sidney Walgrave twice in the same trap! Soda water, you vixen! I wish it had choked that fine husband of yours, I do, by Jove! Come, come, Walgrave, calm yourself, my son, or things

will turn out badly for you. You have put your foot in it already, and if you don't keep that temper of yours down you 'll fall headlong into the pit and that Mathew will overreach you yet; I feel it," said he, addressing himself as he drove from the station, making inquiries which no one seemed able to answer.

He was getting tired and disheartened as he left Waterloo Station and went up Waterloo Road, and was murmuring to himself, "It 's all very well to say 'keep down your temper,' but here I 've been hunting all day and have gone to every station by which they were likely to arrive in London, and no one has seen them. Where do people keep their eyes! Did they come in in a balloon, or on a broomstick, perchance?"

"Mr. Walgrave, sir, can I help you?" said a shoeblack who had been following the detective for some time.

"No, you can't," answered the detective, angrily; "no one can, it seems; the devil must be in it. I 'm looking for some tramps—at least they were disguised as tramps when they left a certain place."

"How many were there?" asked the boy.

"One man, about thirty, his mother, and a little boy eight years old; but, of course you have n't seen them; no one seems to have eyes to-day."

"Well, I have," said the boy. "I have seen no tramps, but I saw coming out of the station—not to-day, though, it must have been two or three days ago"——

"That 's it; that 's it; speak, boy. What did you see? Quick! But here, let 's get into this hallway. Now what did you see—the tramps?"

"No, sir; but a man about the age you said, and a woman carrying a child wrapped up just as if it was sick. The man had a bundle, but they were clean-looking people; no one could call them tramps, but they were countrified and seemed to want to get away from the crowd; they pushed their way out of the station and took an omnibus."

"Which way did they go, up or down?"

"They went over Waterloo Bridge, for I stood looking at them; why, I don't know, unless it was instinct, for I want to be a detective some day."

"Yes, yes, it must be them. You saw them get in the

omnibus, but who saw them get out?—that 's the push. What omnibus was it?"

"O, one belonging to the Elephant and Castle, No. 8."

"Are you sure it was No. 8?"

"Yes, sir, for old Nicholas is the driver, and I saw him plain; he 's always racing with the other companies' omnibuses and getting into trouble; the people in his omnibus don't like it; they 're afraid of upsetting, and they take his number and bring a complaint against him, and if he had n't been so long with the company he 'd be discharged."

"Well, my lad, you see old Nicholas, find out what you can, and then come to me at that little coffee shop near Hungerford market, where you 've been so often, and I 'll give you a good supper, my lad, and something more if you can put me on the track of those parties. Here comes No. 8 omnibus. You get in and pump the old man, and I 'll take the next one and meet you on the other side of the bridge where I told you."

The lad jumped up and sat by the driver, with his box of blacking and brushes, for he would not have been allowed inside. Shoeblacks are not expected to ride, but tramp from street to street. Such is life!

The detective, on arriving at the west side of Waterloo Bridge, got down, turned to his left and walked till he arrived at Hungerford market at the end of Hungerford Bridge. The market is no longer there, but in its place is a grand railway station known as the Charing Cross Station; but at the time that I am writing about, there was a fine market there. Detective Walgrave passed through it on his way to the coffee shop, bought a fine lobster for his supper, and, being very hungry, bought the largest one he could find; and as he turned away with it his mouth watered with anticipation of the grand supper he would make; but, as time will show, the lobster was never destined to go closer to Walgrave's heart than it was at that time, tightly pressed against his left side with his strong arm, as if defying it to escape him.

There were very few persons in the coffee shop, it being late, and business at this place being done mostly in the morning and from twelve to two o'clock, and was patronized by workmen. For three pence they could get a large

cup of tea or coffee, and if they wished to bring an egg or a herring it was cooked free for them. Such was the place that Walgrave had chosen to take his supper in, for, having invited the shoeblack, he could not have gone to a hotel. He walked to a retired corner of the room, sat down on the bench at a small table, and ordered a cup of coffee, bread and butter, pepper and salt, vinegar and oil. "It will be a little extra," remarked the waiter; "All right, my man, I 'll pay the difference," and he began to prepare his lobster. Everybody had left by this time, except one man who was eating his supper, not far from Walgrave; the lobster was ready and the sauce just to the detective's taste; he was about to take the first mouthful when the door opened and the shoeblack entered with a downcast look; he had failed to find the tramp.

"Come here and have your supper," said the detective. "I see by your face that you have not found my tramp."

At the word "tramp" the man at the other table had given a start, and had half turned round and recognized the detective. He hardly knew how to act. The look he gave the detective proved to him that he was not known to him, so he thought himself safe. But he had reckoned without the boy, who was really quite unknown to him, and from whom he feared no danger. But no sooner had the boy looked at him as he turned round than his face changed from disappointment to joy, as he answered, "Yes, I have, sir; here he be; that 's the man;" and he rushed at Jerry, for it was really him.

But Jerry was not a coward, and he made up his mind to fight for his liberty; so when he saw that he was known he jumped up, gave the lad a box on the ear that brought him to the floor, and ran for the door. He reached it first, but Walgrave was after him like a shot. Jerry stopped short in the doorway. The detective, who was running full speed, bumped against him with such terrific force that he fell backwards to the floor, half stunned, while Jerry rushed out. Happily it was dark in this lane or he could not have run far in the streets of London without being stopped. When he reached the main street he looked about for a cab, and, as luck would have it, he not only saw one, but two, worse luck! He called one, jumped in and called out, "To Whitechapel Road." It was time, for he could

hear footsteps coming in the lane he had just left. The detective and boy had recovered from their fall. The boy was ahead and reached the head of the lane in time to see Jerry get into the cab, and cried to the other cab just passing, "Stop and take a gentleman that's coming," he rushed after Jerry's cab and managed to overtake it and hang behind for quite a while before he was seen by a passing cabman, who called out, "Cut behind." Cabby did cut behind, and to such good purpose that the boy dropped off in a hurry, howling like one possessed, and rubbing his back. But, though the boy was gotten rid of, apparently, at least, Jerry was not safe, though he seemed to be far ahead of the detective, and he might yet have escaped but for an unforeseen catastrophe.

As they neared the end of London Bridge they saw a great impassable crowd, and they found themselves at a dead stop—for where there is a crowd in London you have to wait for it to disperse, for there is no backing out of it; so that Jerry found himself in the middle of a dense crowd of people and vehicles, unable to take a step backwards or forwards. The detective could not be far off. Would Jerry stay there and be caught? "No," said he, "not if I know it;" and, opening the cab door, he slipped out among the crowd, closing the door.

He saw that the cause of the tumult was the upsetting of a large beer wagon; a wheel had come off and all the barrels were rolling about the street and stopping the thoroughfare; the crowd was getting greater every moment; dozens of cabs, omnibuses, wagons, trucks, pushcarts, were accumulating; half a dozen policemen pushing their way among the people, bullying and making a great noise, but affording very little help.

Jerry did not stay to see how all this would end, but he worked his way the best he could till he reached the steps which led to the small steamer which plied from bridge to bridge for a half penny; he hid in the dark stores till he saw one coming down the river. The steamer stopped and a few passengers boarded her from the small platform. Jerry leaped aboard and felt safe; he had not noticed that just behind him was the boy who had betrayed him to the detective, and that he also had boarded the steamer,

had gone to hide behind one of the boats, and was watching him with cat's eyes.

Jerry thanked his stars that he had escaped so well. This steamer would take him to the lower part of Burr street, not far from the Tower of London. He was there in a few minutes and leaped out. Jerry was not a fool; he did n't look behind him for fear of being noticed should any of the detectives be on board; nor would he go straight home, for the same reason; he walked a little up Burr street, then turned to his right, then to his left, and walking briskly for some distance, arrived near London docks; at the other end of Burr street he looked over his shoulder and saw a good sized boy hide in a doorway. "Ah, ha," thought he, "I 'm followed; well, my lad, I 'll give you the slip in no time. I 've played that game more than once with the gamekeepers. He did not turn to look back again, but kept on, and instead of turning on his left to go to Burr street, he turned to his right, and before the boy could reach the turning he ran full speed for a short distance, then crossed the road at a dark place and hid in a doorway equally dark, and waited to see what the boy would do. He had n't long to wait for he soon turned the corner puffing and blowing, and looked all about like a lost dog in search of his master. The man had disappeared; he must know that he was followed; where had he gone? Perhaps he lived somewhere about here; and the lad looked from door to door on his right, for he was sure that the man had turned to the right. He would look on the right first, then the left as he came back. Jerry understood his maneuvers and thought, "I must make a move soon or he will be on me."

A few people were coming and going, and he watched his opportunity, and when he saw a man and a woman coming his way he stepped out of the doorway as if he were just leaving the house, and walked in front of them, so that if the boy turned round to look he would only see the backs of these two persons who had passed him in the dim gaslight.

Jerry hurried away, turned to his left, found himself in Burr street, and reached his lodgings without any more adventures. We shall leave him there for the present,

with our advice to decamp as soon as possible if he is wise, for delays are dangerous.

The boy, whom we shall call Jack, hunted about, hid in doorways, watched, even knocked at some doors and inquired for a man with a long brown beard, telling the people who answered the bell that the man was his uncle, whom he had come to see and had lost his address, but that he lived somewhere about the neighborhood; he even sniveled a little to give more effect to his distress; but though some sympathized with him others slammed the door in his face, saying, "None of your games with me; I know you; you 're up to some dodge, I 'll bet, my fine fellow; no one with a long beard lives here, or ever did, so get out with you."

So he had lost the clew. "I don't care," he said to himself, "I won't lose courage; he must live somewhere along here, or why should he have disappeared so suddenly."

However, it was getting too late to knock at any more doors. He felt very hungry for he had not had the supper promised him by the detective, nor would it be any use to go back for it, for Mr. Walgrave was probably hunting in another direction; so, as he had a few pennies in his pocket he would go to a cookshop, buy a penny's worth of yesterday's and have a jolly feed. He did so, getting a big paper full of remnants and scrapings of the day before; and, having satisfied his appetite, he looked about for a place to sleep in. It was hard to find. He dare not go in a hallway for he might be given up to the police, so he went down Burr street to the river and actually passed Jerry's lodgings, but his good angel did not whisper it to him; so he kept on his way till he reached the river, and he asked an old bargeman to allow him to sleep in his boat under a sail, and the old man consented and pitied the poor boy who had no home, which fact did n't seem to trouble Jack, who slept like a top till what hour the next day he could n't tell; but when he threw back the sail from his head the sun was shining brightly and the barge was going down the river.

"Hello, youngster," called the old man, merrily, "so you are awake, hey? I thought you would never wake; it 's now twelve, do you know?"

"Twelve," said Jack, with a start and disappointment in his voice, "and I ought to be at work."

"All right, my boy, you shine my shoes and I 'll give you your dinner, for it 's too late for breakfast now;" and the old man laughed.

But poor Jack could not laugh, and he explained that he was to have met his uncle that morning by the London Dock, and that having slept so long he had missed him.

"All right, my lad, we 'll be back at the foot of Burr street by two; we are just going to that ship yonder to get a load of hay."

By half past two he was in Burr street again, and he made up his mind to investigate by going from house to house, and he began at once. He found many houses containing lodgers with long brown beards, for many foreign captains lodge in Burr street to be near their ships; but none had an old woman and a boy with him.

Jack was losing courage. "O, but this is a wild goose chase, and no mistake! I 'll try two more houses, and if I don't succeed I 'll go back to Mr. Walgrave and tell him where I lost the man. I am sorry I slept so late but I was so tired."

He knocked at No. 15. Chance had brought him there. A little girl opened the door and he made the same inquiries of her. The little girl said: "Yes, there 's a man here with a long beard, and an old woman with a little boy. Are you his brother? Do you want to go up?"

"What room do they live in?" asked Jack.

"O, right at the top of the house," said the girl; "I 'll show you."

"Well, not now," said Jack, "I 'll come to-morrow. I only wanted to know if they had come yet. Don't tell them that I 've been here. I want to give them a surprise. Good by." And he hurried away, rejoiced at the discovery he had made. He ran to the river, boarded a small steamer, that being the cheapest and quickest way. It was getting dark. He landed at Hungerford Bridge, ran to the coffee shop in the hope of finding the detective there, or at least a note from him, telling him where to meet him.

He was not mistaken. A note awaited him there; it read thus: "I will be here at eight p. m. Wait for me."

As it was near that time Jack did not have long to wait.

Walgrave came in at the appointed time, looking worried and exhausted, but his face brightened when he saw the boy's sparkling eyes. He knew that he had good news; so he called to him, "Come here, Jack, and tell me all you know."

Jack did so.

"Bravo, Jack," said Walgrave, "why, you 're a detective already; well done, my boy; here 's a shilling; get some supper. I 'm off to catch my tramps."

"Don't you want me, Mr. Walgrave?"

"No, my lad; you look done up."

Walgrave walked out as if treading on air, so pleased was he to be on the right tack again. "O, ho, Mr. Mathew, what will you say when you hear that while you are looking in the country for the tramps I have them here under my thumb, or soon will have them, at least?" Jumping into a cab he was at Burr street in three quarters of an hour knocking at the door of No. 15. A stout woman of about fifty opened the door and asked him what he wanted. "I want to see a friend of mine who lives here with his mother and boy."

"Indeed," said the woman, "if I had known that he was to have people calling on him every hour of the day, and night too, I would n't have let the rooms."

Walgrave thought the girl must have told her mistress about Jack having called. He only hoped she did n't tell Jerry. "Well, ma'am, it 's only for once; I won't call again. On the top floor, you said?"

"No, I did n't say so; but it is. I shall have to go and light you up, perchance."

"No, ma'am; I 'll find my way, don't trouble;" and, running lightly up the stairs, thinking to himself, "Will he show fight? I don't think he would dare; it would only make it worse for him," he went up four flights, and, tiptoeing, he placed his ear at the door and listened; but whoever was in was either very quiet or asleep. The detective opened the door gently but quickly. A strong man was sitting in the furthest corner of the room, and as Walgrave opened the door the man gave a leap that brought down the candle, leaving the room in semi-darkness; only the gas from the street threw its pale light into the room, and, this being the fourth story, it was very dim.

But if Walgrave had flattered himself that Jerry would not give fight he found himself mistaken, for he seemed as anxious to get at Walgrave as Walgrave was to get at him; and he was a strong man and quite a match for the detective, who certainly had not expected this attack or he would have had some of his men on the lookout to help him, but he wanted all the honor of the arrest to himself. Now, would he be able to prevent Jerry's escape? All these thoughts passed through his mind as he fought desperately with the poacher. Furious blows were given and returned. Not a word had been spoken on either side, but they were puffing and blowing like steam engines. Surely it could not last long or they would murder each other. Walgrave's nose was bleeding and he had seen stars a good many times; he must try to trip Jerry, so, twisting his leg around the poacher's, they both fell with a crash that shook the house and brought down the table with what sounded like glasses. They rolled on the floor, but often Jerry was the uppermost, and poor Walgrave felt himself choking under the weight of Jerry's heavy body; still, he would not give in; no, not if he died for it; so he got Jerry by the throat and rolled him over, but he was not able to keep him down for he was a much lighter and older man than Jerry. They had rolled so that they had reached the landing; many of the tenants were alarmed; women were screaming and children crying; the landlady was scolding and threatening to turn them out if they did n't stop fighting; they must remember they were in a respectable house.

"You don't seem to mind me; I 'm coming up there;" and she was just mounting the stairs with a light when Jerry and the detective, who had not ceased to batter each other, and did n't even know that they were on the landing, rolled together down a seemingly bottomless pit, with half a dozen women and as many candles rolling with them to where a lot of people and two policemen were standing.

"Thank heaven," murmured Walgrave, "Jerry won't escape."

"Thank God," said Jerry, "I have you, my fine fellow." And Walgrave and Jerry stood up and faced each other, and saw what?

Yes, what did Walgrave see? Had he the nightmare?

No, it was really Mathew, the detective, covered with blood, it 's true, but still Mathew, staring at him as much surprised as he was himself. "I thought you were Jerry," he said.

"And I thought that *you* were Jerry."

"Now what 's all this?" said the policeman who had been fetched by some of the tenants. "If you think to escape by playing the fool it won't do. Come along with us."

"But we are detectives," they tried to explain, but to no purpose.

"Detectives, indeed, fighting like two devils. Come along." And the policemen, each taking one detective by the coat collar, and shaking him, marched them to the police station. The tenants picked up their landlady and sent for a doctor, who, when he saw her, thought she had been scalped; her face was covered with blood and her head as bare as a pole.

"Who did this?" he asked with a voice of thunder. "If we were in North America I would say that it is the work of red Indians; but here, in England! Will no one answer me? Did any of you do it?"

"No, no," they all repeated; "it was two detectives; at least they said they were detectives."

"Detectives!" repeated the doctor, with indignation; "Two thieves, more likely. Did they rob her?"

But before anyone could answer him he received a blow in the face which nearly knocked him over. They had not been idle during all these inquiries. The old woman's face had been bathed with cold water in order to ascertain the extent of her injuries; this had revived her, and, woman-like, her first thought had been for her appearance. Raising her hands hurriedly to feel her hair, they had come in contact with the face of the doctor, who was bending over her, and had sent him on his back, and in order to save himself he had very naturally caught at the first object within his reach, which happened to be a chair with a basin of water on it; the chair flew over his head, while the basin slipped off and emptied its contents in the doctor's face; he began to spit with all his might, not relishing blood and water, however much he might have liked spirits and water.

The old woman jumped up when she had felt her head bare, and was screaming: "Where 's my hair? Where 's my hair? O, you villain, what have you done with my hair?" and having no idea that it was the doctor she was addressing, she continued: "Wait, my fine fellow, I 'll help you; spitting at me, indeed!" and picking up the tin basin, she began to belabor him with it. Bang, bang it went on the top of the doctor's head, with a noise like thunder! Poor doctor! If no one had come to his rescue he would soon find himself not only without hair but without a head. Some one took pity on him and stood between him and the enraged landlady, which maneuver gave the doctor time to rise. He picked up what he thought was his handkerchief, and began to mop his face, but he was soon spitting worse than ever. It was the old woman's wig that he had mistaken for his handkerchief. O, horror! His mouth was full of nasty hair, and it seemed to stick right down his throat.

The old lady made a rush for the wig, and, shaking it in his face, shrieked: "O, it 's not enough for you to be fighting in the room I rented you, you must knock me down the stairs and pull the hair off my head, eh? Where 's the other blackguard you were fighting with? Why don't you answer me instead of shoving your hands down your throat and spitting like those nasty fishes—I forget their names—they spit black; and you spit red. You won't answer, eh? Take that," and she gave him a whack with her wig, right across the eyes, which made him wink.

"Say, madam, how dare you? What kind of a place is this I 've been called to?"

"A respectable house, I 'd have you know, you son of a sea cook, and you won't stay in it, I can tell you, nor your nasty old mother either; what kind of bringing up has she given you?"

"My mother, why, you know nothing about my mother, woman; how dare you insult her?"

One of the tenants had been pulling at her skirts for some time, trying to make her understand that she was talking to the doctor, and not to her tenant, and she had understood his actions as encouragement to go on. At last an old maid, as dry as a stick, Miss Jennings by name, screamed in her ear: "Are you blind, Mrs. Chaney? That

gentleman 's the doctor we 've sent for, and not the gentleman with the long beard—can't you see?"

"Lord o' mercy, is that true, and me beating him like crazy, mistaking him for that low fighting fellow!" She wiped the blood from her nose with the wig, forgetting in her excitement that it was n't her handkerchief. However, she was saved from a long explanation by the arrival of a policeman, and remembering that she had no wig, at least, not on her head, she rushed away and disappeared down the basement stairs, leaving the doctor and the tenants to adjust matters with the bluecoat, who looked about, not knowing what to make of this new fracas. But as no one made a complaint he asked to be allowed to go to the room where the two men had been fighting, as he wanted to find a detective's badge which must have been lost during the struggle.

Miss Jennings gave him a lighted candle, telling him he would have to go alone as the landlady was ill, and she, being a single young lady, he could n't expect *her* to go.

The policeman smiled and said he did n't know where the men's eyes were to allow her to remain single, and that he wished he was not married himself.

"O, now then, get away with you; do you really mean it?"

He smiled and pressed her hand as he took the candlestick from her, saying as he went upstairs, "Well, really, love never dies—hope, I mean—here 's this bag o' bones, with a skin like parchment, would get married if she could!"

CHAPTER XXI.

WALGRAVE and Mathew were dragged away not over gently, for they were supposed to be drunk, and certainly looked far from respectable, with their torn clothes and bloody and bruised faces. Walgrave had one eye closed, while Mathew 's nose was double its ordinary size, and as red as a tomato. They walked quickly for some distance, for they were dazed. Walgrave's temper was up. He, one of the best detectives, dragged along the street by a common policeman, and shaken like a dog. He was coming to his senses, though his head felt like a drum; he felt his position deeply. A thought struck him and he stood still, shaking himself free of the policeman's grip, and he said: "Look here, fellow, I can prove to you that I 'm a detective; I 'll show you my badge." He searched for it where he generally kept it, but it was no longer there; and though he examined all his pockets he could n't find it.

"Here, here, enough of that tomfoolery," said the policeman; "if you 're a detective, I 'm the pope; ha, ha, ha! Now then, take my advice and don't try to get away or else you 'll get a rap on the head before you know it, and I should think you 'd had enough of that for once." And so poor Walgrave had to march to the station, the policeman holding him by the collar as if he were a mere thief. Yet he could not blame the policeman, who was only doing his duty.

Mathew had not thought of his badge, and being at some distance ahead of Walgrave, he had not heard what had just passed between him and the policeman, or they might both have been allowed to go free, for Mathew's badge was hanging by a string around his neck. Luckily the station was not far off, and when the captain heard what they had to say, and saw Mathew's badge, he knew that they were both detectives; he did not recognize the name of Mathew, but the name of Walgrave, the famous detective who was known to be employed on the case of Lady Montgomery, was known, and to see him in such a dreadful

plight was terrible. The captain placed his room at their disposal and the doctor was called in. One policeman was sent in search of the missing badge and another for decent clothes for both; then a cab was fetched and Walgrave and Mathew rode to Scotland Yard to explain matters and to ask leave for a week, for it was not possible for either of them to attempt detective work for a time.

As they left Scotland Yard together in the cab Walgrave said to Mathew: "Now I want you to come to my rooms and tell me how you came to be in Jerry's lodgings when I thought you miles away."

"Well, you see, Mr. Walgrave, I wanted to be too clever, and to arrest Jerry all by myself, and I've paid dearly for it, besides nearly murdering you; but I think I got the worst of it. You have fists like iron," he said flatteringly, for in reality Walgrave had suffered most, and Mathew knew it.

When they reached Walgrave's rooms they had a good supper and some brandy, which made them feel more like themselves; and though they were bruised and sore they did justice to the meal; and as they sat back in their chairs, with another glass before them, they could not help laughing at the appearance that each presented, each thinking he was the better looking, when in reality it was six of one and half a dozen of the other. Walgrave laughed at Mathew, who mopped his swollen nose delicately, as though it were a peach, from which he feared to rub the bloom; and Mathew laughed at Walgrave's half-closed eye that kept winking at him; "And to think that I did it," thought Mathew. "O, that's too good for anything, my poor chief," and though he was in great pain he laughed merrily.

"Come, come," said Walgrave, "just stop laughing; you look worse than I do, and tell me how you came to be at Jerry's before me."

"With pleasure, Mr. Walgrave. Of course you know that I found Lady Florence's clothes at Jerry's house."

"Yes, yes, I know that."

"Well, I came to London as soon as I could after telegraphing about that smart couple you saw at the Red Lion, and who passed under Jackson's nose. I was told by one of the parties that the young woman actually

flirted with him, and that was why he never noticed the man. There 's trouble brewing for Jackson; he was n't put there to flirt; the captain is wild about it."

"Well," said Walgrave, "he 's no worse than we are; we 've all failed. See how she fooled me with her soda water, and I was n't flirting with her; I thought I was exceedingly clever, and that I was pumping her, when in reality I was like wax in her clever hands; but wait; I 'll catch her yet; I 'm sure to know her again. But go on; I 'm curious to find out how you knew where Jerry lived."

"Well, as I was saying, I came to London hoping that they had been caught, and I was told that Lord Frankford and his daughter had been arrested instead of the two I had described, and that the guilty parties had entirely disappeared. I made a few inquiries to no purpose. Then the thought struck me that the Jerrys would remember having left the clothes in their cottage and, of course, he would come back for them, never thinking that in his hurry to leave, he had left the door open; so I returned and lay in wait for him, for I thought if I caught Jerry we would soon make him tell about the child; and I smiled to myself in anticipation of the great feast I would make, and the blank look on Jerry's face when he found me in possession of the clothes and waiting for him. I reached the cottage at night, and pushing the door to I sat and waited for him, for they must have missed the clothes when they got to their lodging and I thought they would come back by the midnight train. I heard the whistle and said to myself, 'He 'll be here in a quarter of an hour.' But no; hours passed and no Jerry. I was mad with disappointment. Had he heard that the clothes had been found? Perhaps he hadn't missed them yet; so I waited and hoped that he would yet come. I could see through the cracks in the shutters that day was beginning to dawn; I walked the floor, for I had been sitting on a hard chair all night and was very stiff. I looked at my watch and saw that it was eight o'clock. I would wait until nine; then if no one came I would go back to London by the half past train. I pushed an old easy chair near the window, sat down in it and thought 'What a fool I have been to sit all night on a wooden chair while this old but comfortable one was near me!' and

I looked angrily at the wooden chair as if it was to blame, and not I. But what was that on the floor? Something white; it was not there a moment ago. I got up quickly and picked up the something, which must have been under the big armchair before I pushed it near the window."

"Well, what was it?" asked Walgrave, excitedly. "Do get on; you are so slow."

"I 'm coming to it, and you would have known by this time if you had n't interrupted me. Well, it was a piece of paper with two addresses written on it. The first was No. 15 Burr street, and the second No. 10 Lemon street."

"What!" shouted Walgrave, "his address? Well, you were in luck."

"So I thought," replied Mathew; "and I put two and two together and came to the conclusion that these addresses had been given to him by the parties interested in the stealing of the child, his employers, and that he had dropped the paper. Now, did he know what was on it? If so, he might remember the addresses and go there, but if not, he would have to go elsewhere and communicate with his employer. Still, I did not lose a moment. I would risk it. I returned to London and went straight to Burr street. It was getting dark. I knocked at No. 15, and O, joy! the old lady who opened the door in answer to my inquiries said, 'Yes, there 's a man here with his mother and little boy. What do you want with him?' 'He 's a friend of mine,' I replied, 'and I want to see him.' 'Well, you can't see him, for he 's out, but he 'll soon be in; you can go up to his room if you like, and wait for him there.' That was just what I wanted. She showed me the room, and I walked in and waited for Jerry. You know the rest. I mistook you for Jerry, but I was surprised that he should rush at me; I had n't expected him to show fight, for that would only make it worse for himself, and he could n't have escaped with so many people in the house."

"And," said Walgrave, "I was surprised to see him rush at me, and was not prepared for it."

"But how did you find out where he lived," asked Mathew, "and happen to come for him the same day that I

did?—for you have been in London for some days past. Where did you get the clew?"

"It was n't I who got it, but Jack the shoeblack," and he related what the reader already knows; and how he himself had jumped into the second cab and kept Jerry's in sight, and had kept quite close to it in the crowd, never removing his eyes from it; and when the crowd had scattered enough for Jerry's cab to move on he had continued to follow until they reached Whitechapel Road, "when Jerry's cabman had got down, I suppose, to ask where he was to drive to, and found his cab empty. Yes, Jerry had disappeared; how he had managed it is beyond me. I can swear that I never removed my eyes from the cab."

"O," said Mathew, "it was easy enough to open the door just enough to pass through and mix in the crowd. He must have known that he was being followed; but what puzzles me is how he managed to leave his room with his mother and the child without being noticed by the landlady, who lives in the basement and can see every one who either comes or goes."

"I don't think they went out together. Very likely he kept the landlady talking in the back of the house while his mother stepped out with the child."

"I believe you 're right, for she seemed to know that Jerry was out, since she told me to go up and wait for him. He must have gone openly

"Of course he did, and I can understand why the landlady was so displeased when asked to see her lodger, and said if she had known I was to have so many callers she would n't have let him have the room. It was you she referred to, and I thought it was Jack."

"Yes, yes, that 's clear; poor landlady! What a finish we gave her! How we did go down those stairs and were all mixed up when we got to the bottom! And what a start you gave me when I saw that it was not Jerry, but you that I had, Mr. Wingrave!"

"The same with me," said Walgrave. "And those fools of policemen to grab us as they did. I never was so placed in all my life, and I am so disfigured that it will be impossible for me to show myself at any respectable place

for a week or more, with all the doctoring in the world; and it was my intention to call on a lady who is, I think, the principal in all this affair. How she would rejoice if she could see us both."

"O, you mean the one with the soda water?"

"Yes and no; she is mixed up with it, as we have proof, but she can't be the principal, for the one I mean is tall and dark."

"Tall and dark," repeated Mathew, with a light in his black eyes that showed that he had come to some conclusion—"I have it," he said, his eyes flashing brightly.

"What have you got?" asked Walgrave.

"Well, unless I am very much mistaken the dark gentleman is really the tall, dark lady you intended to visit."

Walgrave gave a start; it had never occurred to him that Miss Hogg would dare dress as a man, but he felt that Mathew was right. Certainly Mathew was getting ahead of him. He had never been told about Miss Hogg, and yet he was on her track, and had found out more than he himself had, who had been told in confidence of Miss Hogg's threats of revenge.

"I believe you are right, Mathew. O, if I were only presentable I would call on her and make short work of all this business; the brazen baggage, to dress in men's clothes! Why, those Americans have no decency; and in a strange country, too."

"Oh, ho," thought Mathew, "it must be that American heiress whom every one is talking about. Ah, Mr. Walgrave, you 've let the cat out of the bag. O, if I were only fit to be seen; but I am as bad as Walgrave or I would steal a march on him. Only think, he has kept all this to himself. I 'm glad I gave you the thrashing I did; I 'll be even with you yet." But he only said, "It is really a pity that you can't see her, and as I 'm as bad as you are, if not worse, I can't offer to call in your name."

"No, of course not; we must wait; there 's no help for it, and I won't try to see her before next week; nor will you be able to present yourself before that time," he said, hypocritically, for he feared that Mathew had it in mind to overreach him if he could.

"I think not," answered Mathew; "I feel very bad, and with your permission I 'll go home and nurse myself unless you have more to tell me."

"No, no," replied Walgrave, "I have nothing more to say."—And he thought, "I 'm afraid I 've already said too much. Why did I tell him that the person I suspect is an American? It must be that I am not myself to-day; my head is like a drum; the fellow has half killed me." He added aloud: "I need rest myself, so you may go home, as you proposed;" and Mathew went.

CHAPTER XXII.

When Mathew reached home his wife tied a piece of raw beefsteak over his nose, and he retired to rest and plan. The next day the swelling had gone down, but his face was covered with black and blue bruises; it would be madness to try to call on anyone; he would not be admitted. He did not lose his temper, as Walgrave usually did, but he remained cool, and reflected. Surely if there 's a will there must be a way, and the will was not lacking. He thought for some time, and then jumping up, he said: "I have it; yes, I 'll do it—though it 's repugnant to me; there 's no other way. I can't stay here until my face is presentable, so I 'm off this afternoon. I wish I knew where that American woman is stopping—whether at a hotel or a private lodging house. It would be no use to ask Walgrave, for I can see that he means to be the head of this affair; but I 'll find out, and from headquarters too. I know that Lord Montgomery is in London; I 'll send to his club; he must know."

The same afternoon Lord Montgomery received a note; it was handed to him by the waiter, who said, "The boy is waiting for the answer, my lord."

"All right," he replied, and opened the note, which simply said, "Detective wishes to see you at the corner to your right." The captain hurried downstairs hoping to get news of his cousin; he looked for the boy that the waiter had told him about, but not seeing him, he walked to his right toward the corner of the street, expecting to see Walgrave; but the man who approached him was not Walgrave, nor could he be a detective, for there was no mistaking the fact that his face was bruised and one of his eyes was bloodshot and the other had a patch over it; in fact, he looked like a drunkard; no makeup could have made him what he was, and he must have been pretty well knocked about, and that quite recently; but as the man seemed determined to speak to him, he said, "Don't ask me for money; I never give anything to drunkards."

"My lord, I am Mathew, the detective, and I have been nearly murdered in your cause; pretend not to know me but give me the address of the young American woman, and it will look as if you were giving me a shilling."

"I don't know it, Mathew, I thought that she had returned to America."

Mathew felt very much disappointed. He had felt sure that Lord Montgomery knew.

"I can tell you where she used to stop when she visited us, for the major went home with her once," said Lord Montgomery. "It was at the Temperance Hotel, Southampton Road. Her name is Miss Hogg." He gave him the address that he had been writing, and as people were beginning to look at the strange pair, one of them undoubtedly a gentleman and the other a drunken brute—he said, "Now, my man, take my advice, leave off drinking," and gave him a paper wrapped up in a five pound note.

A policeman stopped and asked, "What has this fellow done—any charge against him?"

"No," answered Lord Montgomery, sharply, "the man 's all right and peaceable; it was I stopped him;" and hurrying to Mathew, he said, "Mind you keep your word and don't drink any more, my good fellow."

"No, sir; thank you, sir," replied Mathew, tugging at his old hat and walking away.

Lord Montgomery returned to his club, thinking: "Poor Mathew must have had a terrible encounter with ruffians to be in such a state. It is n't all roses with those detectives."

Mathew waited until nightfall before he risked approaching the Temperance Hotel. He had gone to see Lord Montgomery in broad daylight for he knew that it would be easier to see him then than in the evening when the club rooms were full; but to go to Southampton Road was quite another thing; he would attract a crowd and that he had no wish to do. He was certainly well made up, and his bruises added to his appearance as a confirmed drunkard, for he had adorned himself with an extra stomach; still, he thought it best to wait till night, which he did. Walking to the cab-stand which is immediately in front of the hotel, he entered into conversation with the

cabby, asking him if he knew of a job that he could get. The cabby laughed and asked what kind of a job he wanted—a drinking job or a fighting job. Several of the cabbies had drawn near to see the fun and make low jokes on the poor fellow. "No," replied Mathew, "I want a working job, for I mean to reform and I should like to go to America."

He was told that lots of Americans were stopping "at this hotel," pointing to the one opposite.

"Is that true?"

"O, yes, there be a good many of 'em, but they 're not likely to want you."

"Well, you see I was told there was a rich heiress, tall and dark, who did just what she took a fancy to and did n't care a snap for the opinion of anyone; and I mean to ask her to take me as her coachman or footman, or anything to get away from bad company. If you could only point her out to me I would feel obliged."

"O, I know who he means," said one, "but she left the hotel weeks ago."

"No, she has n't," said another, "I saw her yesterday with the prettiest little girl you 'd wish to see."

"She did go away," said another, "but came back a few days ago with her mother and a pert young woman, her servant, I believe."

"O," thought Mathew, who had listened in astonishment to this talk, "is it possible that Miss Hogg has dared to bring the child to the hotel? She must be mad! She has certainly taken a bad step. I would never have looked for the child in this hotel; I can't believe it."

"Well, old fellow," said one cabby, addressing Mathew, "do you mean to go in and ask for this young lady? I must tell you that your looks are not in your favor. Where did you get those bruises?"

"Well, you see, my mother, who lives in the country, sent me a tenner and I treated some fellows till we could hardly stand, and were turned out of the public house. As we were going along looking for another one, some of the fellows who had seen that I still had a fiver and some change, set on me to get it and I fought like the devil; hearing a policeman coming they ran away and I crawled into a hallway more dead than alive."

"O, bosh!" said one, "you look as if you had a fiver."

"Indeed, it 's true," said Mathew, taking the five pound note that Lord Montgomery had put into his hand, and showing it to the astonished unbelievers.

All the cabbies became more polite; one of them said, "You 'll stand treat, won't you? There 's a good fellow."

"I would," returned Mathew, "if I had n't made a vow when I was saved from those blackguards that I would leave off drinking," and he replaced the note in his pocket, to the great disappointment of most of the cabbies, who muttered something about "mean fellow."

One of the cabs was called by a servant from the hotel; the cabby hurriedly turned his cab and brought it to the curbstone in front of the hotel; a tall, young, dark lady came down the steps followed by a short, young woman, dark also, who seemed to be the servant of the tall one. They got into the cab and drove away. Mathew had slipped off, and when the cabman turned round to tell him that that was the American lady he had been inquiring about, he was nowhere to be seen.

"Well, did you ever see such a fellow?" one remarked. "He must have run away; he did n't have the pluck to ask her."

"Well, no wonder," said another, "with a face like he 's got; he 'd be apt to be arrested. But where did he go to?"

"I can't tell; I was looking at the lady," another replied.

When Mathew saw Miss Hogg on the steps of the hotel and about to enter a cab, he made up his mind to follow her; so he watched for an opportunity to slip away unseen by his new friends. They all seemed busy looking at her. Mathew looked to see if he could turn a corner; but no, there was no corner nearer than Russell Square, and that was on the other side of the street from where he was standing, in fact on the same side as the hotel, and in full view of all the cabbies; so he popped behind one of the cabs a few yards from where the owner was standing, and as an omnibus passed he jumped in. It was going the same way as Miss Hogg's cab, which he could still see; presently it stopped near a pastry shop and the stout young woman got down; so did Mathew. As soon as he

had seen the cab stop he had jumped down, to the relief of some in the omnibus, who had looked upon him with disgust, though he had been well behaved. He approached the shop in a loafing way, as if he were hungry for some of the display in the window. He had seen Katy, for it was really she, buy some pastry and then return to the cab. Mathew could not very well hang behind, so he made a sign to a cabby—for they were near another stand—and putting five shillings into his hand, said, "Follow that cab and don't lose sight of it."

"All right, sir."

And so Mathew was on Miss Hogg's track for good. She was going to see Lady Florence, and the pastry that Katy had bought was for her.

Poor Miss Hogg! After all the trouble she had gone through, was she going to be so easily caught, or would she be cute enough to suspect that she might be followed? She had gone out very openly to be going to visit a person whom she was taking so much trouble to hide. Did she think herself so secure that there was no danger of being suspected? No; while Katy was buying the cakes she had noticed the supposed loafer who, to her cute eyes, had a sort of respectability about him not generally seen in an abandoned drunkard; and she saw that his eyes seemed to be looking at Katy more than at the eatables. She watched him and thought: "His make-up is perfect; how bruised his face looks; it seems quite real." The gaslight was shining right in his face and she could see him as plainly as in bright daylight, as she sat far back in a corner of the cab where he could not have seen her if he had been so disposed; but he felt so secure in his disguise that it never entered his head that he could be suspected by Miss Hogg, who had never seen him before. He forgot that a guilty conscience is always on the alert and ready to suspect every one. As Katy came out Miss Hogg saw this man move away, and putting her head out of the window, the one furthest from the shop, she saw a cab approach the man and she knew she was followed by a detective. As Katy gave her the cakes she whispered: "We are followed; tell the cabman to drive to Drury Lane Theater."

Katy did so, and laughed merrily as she sat back in

the cab, and said: "Surely these cakes must have a special merit for us to come so far out of our way to buy them and then go back to the theater just for the pleasure of eating them there. O, it 's a good joke!"

"Do you know, Katy, I ought to have been born a man. I love adventure, and nothing pleases me better than to mislead those detectives. Even if there is danger there 's also a great deal of fun, I guess. Did you notice that fellow at the shop window watching you? He had a good make-up of bruises."

"O, but they were real bruises; I would swear to it," replied Katy.

"Nonsense, he 's the man who is following us."

"Is that so? What do you propose to do? You are not going to the theater?"

"O, but we are; and when this fellow has seen us go in he will make sure that we are settled for the evening. Then we can slip out and go and eat our cakes elsewhere;" and she laughed heartily. "But here we are," as the cab stopped at the door of the theater. "Mind you don't look round for the man or you will spoil all; go right into the ticket office and leave me to act."

Katy obeyed. Miss Hogg alighted and walked to the door of the theater, but before the cabman could turn round she looked back and called out in a loud American voice, "I say, cabby, mind you be here at eleven o'clock, not a minute later; or, I guess you won't see much of my money."

"Yes, mum," he answered and drove off.

Miss Hogg had made this long speech to give herself time to see if the detective was near. Yes, she had seen him on the point of alighting, but as she had turned from the door to speak to her cabman he had sat back in a hurry. Now that she was sure, she went in and joined Katy, and purchased two tickets for the boxes, for they were not dressed for the dress circle. "Now," said Miss Hogg, as she sat on the back seat, "You sit in front so that he can see you should he follow us into the house. He will have to go in the pit, and from where I am sitting it will not be easy for him to see me; still, he 'll manage it; and when he has made sure that I am really there he 'll

not trouble to look again as long as he sees you there, and I shall be able to slip out and go where I intended to."

"All right, Mamie, and I 'll stay here and have this bruised faced gentleman escort me back to the hotel. How blank he 'll look when he sees only poor me getting out of the cab!"

"Wait, wait, Katy, we 're not through yet."

"I see him," said Katy without turning round; "he 's in the pit and looking up to every box, though he can see me very well; he 's a cute fellow, but he 's looking uneasy; he misses you and he 's trying to look in our box. Don't look, Mamie, he 's going to stand on a seat."

Miss Hogg took the paper bag and pretended to be eating with great appetite. Mathew saw her and was satisfied; he looked from one box to the other as if looking for some one, just as an usher was coming to him to tell him to sit down.

The play began. The house was full, the play good; but Mathew saw very little of it; he kept turning round and was pleased to see Katy's laughing face. She seemed to be thoroughly enjoying herself. At last, to Mathew's great relief, the play was over. Still, Katy remained in her seat until almost every one had left. At last he saw her get up to leave; he hurried out and arrived just in time to see her disappear in her cab, and he naturally thought that her mistress had got in first. He jumped into his own cab and followed; but as he thought, "I have gained nothing to-night for I know that they are going back to the hotel," he still kept an eye to the cab; it stopped, as he had expected, at the hotel; but, to his great disappointment, only Katy got out. Was Miss Hogg going alone somewhere else? He must watch. But no. Katy began to joke with the cabman, who seemed flattered and pleased and answered her in her own style, which he would never have done had the mistress been in his cab.

Poor Mathew's heart beat fast. What a disappointment! She had taken him in, and he saw at once that Katy's joking with her cabman was more to give her the opportunity to watch him and enjoy his defeat than the pleasure she could derive from the few words of flattery she received from him. Mathew no longer hid himself but stood there looking the very picture of disappointment

and astonishment. Miss Hogg must have known him, and yet he was sure that he had never seen her before. As he stood there very near the hotel door it opened and a tall, dark young lady appeared on the threshold and called out, "Katy, are you going to stay out all night?" It was Miss Hogg. She had returned from her visit to Lady Florence.

Poor Mathew! He had seen enough for one night; he came to the conclusion that he had to deal with a clever woman, and that it would be hard work to prove that she had taken the child. He went home very sore and tired. He had not, however, quite lost his time, for now he knew Miss Hogg and her servant, and he promised himself that the next time she would not slip so easily through his fingers as she had done that night. He would keep all this to himself and not give Walgrave a chance to laugh at him.

CHAPTER XXIII.

When Jerry had given Jack the slip he said to himself: "I must make a move; this place is getting too hot for me; I wish my mother had not lost a day resting."

When he got home he told his mother everything. She replied: "Well, Jerry, that is certainly bad news, but as the boy lost sight of you near London Dock it will take him some time to find you out here unless you show yourself, so let us keep close in the house until to-morrow night; then we will slip out quietly, the child and I going one way, and you another. I 'll go straight to that small room you told me of and where you have left my parcel. I 'll dress the child in the clothes Miss Hogg gave me, and myself in my new clothes, with my red wig, and as soon as you have made a change in your appearance see about taking the rooms near the Strand that you saw to-day; then you come to our room; or it might be well to give a whistle outside and I 'll come out to you with the child and my bundle of old clothes, for nothing must be left behind. As you have paid a week in advance the landlady will not be on the watch, not so soon after our arrival, at least; and if I should meet her as we leave the house I 'll say that I 've been calling on her new tenant, for she would not recognize me as the poor woman who had come in with a poorly dressed little boy some hours before."

"Yes, that will do," replied her son; "if we can only get away from this place without being followed. I 'm on pins and needles. Every knock I hear makes my heart beat. I wish we could go to-night, mother."

"No, my son, that would never do; it is too late; we would be suspected if we went to our lodgings in the middle of the night, and we might meet that boy and others that are on our track. No, Jerry, we must wait." And they retired.

The next day Jerry could hardly be kept in the house. He remarked that he felt like a rat caught in a trap.

"Keep quiet, Jerry, and watch for suspicious looking people," said his mother.

He did watch, but no one came to the door except the milkman, butcher, baker, and other tradesmen. Darkness was coming on and he felt relieved; he prepared to go. Mrs. Jerry had everything ready. Jerry was going downstairs to see if the coast was clear for his mother and the child to leave unseen when he heard a rap at the front door. He waited to see who it was before going down and hid in the turning on the stairs. The little servant ran up from the basement, opened the door, and to Jerry's dismay he heard the boy asking for him and the little girl offering to show him up, but, to his great relief, he heard him refuse. Jerry had already planned what to do should the boy come up; he would gag him and tie him to the bedstead and decamp with his mother and the child if the boy was alone; but it was not likely that he would come alone to Jerry's room; he could not have decoyed him; he was too sharp a fellow to listen to any tales the boy might invent; it would only have put him on his guard. No, some one must be with him, and Jerry and his mother were caught. He might yet fight his way out, but he would have to leave his mother and he could never do that. All these thoughts passed through his mind in less than a minute, and his relief was great as he heard the boy refuse to come up or even to have him told that he had been there.

"Ah, my fine fellow, so you are coming to-morrow, eh, to see your uncle, you young scoundrel! I know you and how you followed me last night, and how you have managed to get here is beyond me; and now that you have made sure of me you are going back to report your success and pilot half a dozen detectives here in no time. But wait, my young spark, when you come back you 'll find the nest empty; the birds will have flown away and you will have to begin your work over again. I wish you were a rabbit. I 'd make short work of you, my lad." And as Jerry heard the door close he ran back to his mother and told her what he had heard.

"Now quick, mother, take the child and go down; stay on the first landing till you hear me talking to the

landlady in the yard; I 'll entice her out there till you 're gone."

"Yes, Jerry, but what about the girl? She 'll see me and report to her mistress."

"Not she," replied Jerry; "she 'll be behind the door listening to what I 'm saying to her mistress; she always does it; I 've caught her often doing it when one of the captains was talking to Mrs. Chaney."

"All right then, let 's go down."

Jerry went first as agreed, and was soon heard talking to Mrs. Chaney at the door of her back kitchen, telling her that he was going out but would soon be back and if anyone happened to ask for him to let them go up to his room and wait there with his mother.

"I hope you 're not going to have many callers, Mr. Smith"—for that was the name she knew him by.

"O, no, mum; it 's only my nephew, and he won't come again after this once," and knowing that his mother and the child were some distance off by this time, he left his landlady with a pleasant good night, little knowing what a fearful night she was doomed to pass, all through him and his visitors. He returned to the hallway for the parcel that he had left there and left the house openly; still, his heart beat fast, for he knew the risk he was running should the boy have had the forethought of leaving some one on the watch, and he seemed cunning enough to have done it. If he had, his mother had been arrested and he would be; every footstep he heard made his blood run cold. He had to go some distance to find a barber to change his appearance; his beard was long and thick, he would get rid of it and only keep his mustache; but as the barber might possibly be questioned he thought it best to rid himself of his beard with his own hand. Having passed the Mint he went into a lane leading to American Square. The lane was at the back of the houses forming the square, and few passed that way except the ashmen to collect the ashes that stood in barrels at the back doors. He made his way to the darkest spot near Mr. Samson's back door, and taking a pair of scissors from his pocket he began to cut his beard, as evenly as it was possible to do it in the darkness, and as close to his face as he dared to, throwing the hair into the ash barrel. Pulling his hat

well over his face, he walked out of the lane and continued his way toward the mineries. Entering a barber's shop next door to a newsdealer's, he asked to have his beard shaved off.

The barber looked at him and said, "Shall I trim it or shave it off?"

"I have no choice in the matter," replied Jerry; "I 've found a place as steward on a ship, and the captain says it don't look clean to have a beard, so as I can't afford to lose the place I must shave; but how I 'm going to manage to shave every morning to please the captain is beyond me; it will be a devil of a job; but make haste, for I have to be on board by eight o'clock;" and so saying, he threw his bundle on the floor.

"That 's your clothes?" remarked the barber.

"Yes, it is, and precious little I have, as you see, so I don't mind parting with my beard. A fellow must eat."

"Certainly, certainly;" and the barber shaved him quickly, leaving a thick mustache.

Jerry was certainly very much improved and so changed that his own mother would n't have known him. He then went to a tailor shop and ordered his livery, carrying it with him, for he did n't dare ask to be allowed to put it on there. He wondered where he could go. It would never do to go to a restaurant and ask for a room to change his clothes in; it would look strange and be talked and wondered about that he should come there to put on his livery. Why could n't he have gone to his new employer's house? No, it would never do. But where could he go? He could n't change it in the street. He was nonplused.

At that moment a cab passed and a thought struck him like lightning; he hailed the cabby, who looked hard at him and asked him what he wanted.

"O, I want to go to Whitechapel Road."

"What part?"

"O, I 'll stop you when I want to get down; I forget the number, but it 's a good way up; what 'll you charge?"

"How do I know when I don't know where you want to go? but I 'd like some 'at in advance."

"Well," said Jerry, "here 's five shillings, and you can give me the change when you set me down. Don't drive

too fast as I'm not acquainted enough in Whitechapel Road to see my way clear, especially at night."

"All right, jump in," the cabby replied, and pocketing the five shillings, he leaped to his box.

Jerry began operations at once, and in a short time he had his livery on and had bundled up his own clothes with the parcel he had brought from his lodging, and was now on the lookout for a chance of leaving the cab unseen by its owner. He could have jumped down at any moment, for they were not going fast, but that would be running the risk of being seen, so he waited until they got into a crowd of cabs and wagons and then he opened the door, slipped out and closed it; he then turned back, hired another cab and was driven to the respectable lodgings he had noticed near the Strand. Leaving his parcel in the cab he ran up the steps of the lodging house, engaged the rooms, as instructed to do by Miss Hogg, and paying a week in advance, he returned to the cab for his paper parcel and carried it into his new lodgings. Locking the door, he put the key in his pocket and asked for a latchkey, as he expected the nurse and young lady to arrive by the last train that night and they would be able to get in without disturbing anyone in the house. The landlady gave him a key and thought, "This servant must belong to some rich family," and was glad to have secured a tenant who paid so liberally and was so considerate as to wish not to disturb the other inmates of the house. Jerry, having secured his key, left the house; he dismissed his cab, and hailing another a little further on, rode near to his mother's room, where he expected to find her. He had done his part well and it remained to be seen how his mother had done hers.

Near Fleet street he stopped the cab, and, getting out, dismissed it and kept on his way until the cab disappeared; then he retraced his steps and turned into Fleet street, whistling. Soon a door opened and a respectable looking woman appeared, holding a child by the hand, and, without seeming to notice him, followed him for some distance. Then the man, having stopped a cab, made a sign to the woman and they all got in.

"Where to?" asked the cabman.

"London Station." And off they went towards London

Bridge. When near the station Jerry stopped the cab, saying, "We 'll get down here and have supper."

"Shall I wait?" asked cabby.

"No," answered Jerry, "it 's only a step to the station;" and cabby drove away.

But the Jerrys did not go in for supper; they stood in the darkest place near the station gate and Jerry watched for an empty cab. The train had just come in and many cabs passed them, but not empty. At last an empty one appeared and Jerry called it to take them to their lodgings. The cabman thought they had just arrived by train, but that, being strangers, they had not known where to get a cab while in the station. So they arrived safely at their new home. The cab was dismissed a few doors away so as to leave no clew behind. Jerry opened the door with his latchkey and they went upstairs.

The rooms were very handsomely furnished and Lady Florence began to feel at home in them. Jerry was to occupy a room in the rear, and the mother a small one next to Lady Florence. The sitting room was a front room with balcony, holding pots of flowers very tastefully arranged. It being very late, they all retired to rest. Lady Florence being told that her aunt would soon come to see her now, and being only a child she believed what was told her, especially as every one was so kind to her; and now that she was well dressed again, she felt comfortable and went peacefully to sleep with her doll in her arms.

As for Mrs. Jerry, she felt happier than she had felt for years to find herself in such a comfortable home. It reminded her of the time when she was Lady Montgomery's maid, before she had married Jerry senior, who had brought her into poverty and disgrace with her former mistress, by poaching, as her son was doing when we first made his acquaintance; so the poor widow had known trouble. All these thoughts came to her that night, every event of her life passing through her mind like a panorama. Yes, she could see the past, but the future, what was that going to be? But hope is strong in almost all of us; so she pictured to herself a life of ease in taking care of the young lady, and she fell asleep making castles in the air, seeing her son reformed and married to some honest girl and perhaps owning a fine farm, she and the wife attending to

the housework and nursing the little children while Jerry worked on the farm and sent the products to market.

Hope is a great blessing given to us by God to soften our present grief and give us courage to go on to the end of our career.

The next morning Miss Hogg received a note to the effect that some one wished to speak to her in Russell Square at ten o'clock A. M. No name or address was given, but she knew well that it was from Jerry, and at ten o'clock she was at the appointed place. Jerry, in his new livery, was waiting for her; she hardly knew him; he certainly was a fine looking footman; he touched his hat, gave her a note, and passed on.

CHAPTER XXIV.

It was the new address that Jerry had given Miss Hogg, not daring to send it to the hotel. Miss Hogg had looked at it and returned to the hotel to tell Katy and make arrangements to go that evening to see the child. We have seen how she was followed and how she eluded Mathew, visited Lady Florence, was back again at her hotel before the play was over, and had the pleasure of seeing the poor detective's look of amazement as he saw only Katy get out of the cab. She was so overjoyed that she could not help showing herself on the doorstep as a defiance and challenge to Mathew to try his wits against hers. "O, my fine fellow," she thought, "you look very blank, but this is nothing to what's coming," and calling to Katy more to attract his attention than because she wanted her, she went inside, and they both retired well pleased with their evening's work.

The next day Miss Hogg prevailed on her mother to order a carriage and go for a ride in Regent Park. Isabelle de Courtney was beautifully dressed and wore a broad-brimmed hat which shaded her face without hiding it. Mrs. Hogg was very proud of her, made a great deal of the little beauty, and was very much pleased, though a little surprised, to see that her daughter made so much of her.

Miss Hogg was very much dressed, though not in good taste, and her bold black eyes seemed to say, "Find fault with me if you dare." Mrs. Hogg was more quietly dressed. They attracted their share of attention in Rotten Row. Miss Hogg looked about her with a defiant look; not being a lady, she wished to be taken for some grand personage, and she thought that if she looked boldly at every equipage that passed she would be supposed to be somebody of consequence. Instead of that, however, she often heard the remark from some gentleman—for the ladies did not seem to notice her—that they were Americans, "but what a little beauty, by Jove! she must be English."

This was not very flattering to Miss Hogg's vanity; still, she was pleased that the child attracted attention, for that had been her motive in going to the park—a part of her plan, in fact.

On leaving the hotel she had noticed an old gentleman seemingly on the point of entering it. She would not have given him a second thought but for the start he gave when his eyes fell on Isabelle, whom she then held by the hand. As the carriage rolled away she had looked back and had seen him on the steps looking after them, and Katy standing at his elbow. "Well," thought Miss Hogg, "whoever he may be he 's in good hands; he must be a detective, but it can't be the one of yesterday; he is much thinner; but what a fool I must be! Of course he was made up, just as this one is, with his long white beard and blue spectacles. One would take him for a professor of about sixty, and most probably he 's quite a young man. They are really hot after me. If this continues we shall have to leave England soon, but I must tease the detectives a little more. At any rate I 'll go through my program, or what 's the use of Isabelle, though she 's a dear child;" and she looked admiringly at her.

The child smiled, and taking her hand, said, "O, I feel so happy with you and dear mamma," looking lovingly at Mrs. Hogg.

The carriage had stopped and the major and several other gentlemen came up to talk to Miss Hogg. They were on foot. Miss Hogg joked with them and said she was very sorry that her carriage was not as big as an omnibus or she would invite them all to get in, but, as it was, she was afraid to invite one or two for fear of making the others jealous, and she laughed aloud, tapping the major on the shoulder with her parasol, for he was the boldest, and he said that he ought to have the preference as he had not forgotten the pleasant ride he had had with her some time ago.

"All the more reason why you should be the last," said one of his friends; "take me, Miss Hogg, and I promise to behave like an angel; with Mrs. Hogg's permission, of course;" bowing to her.

Mrs. Hogg blushed and hardly knew what to say.

She murmured something to the effect that they had come for a quiet ride, not expecting to meet any friends.

Little Isabelle, young as she was, and unaccustomed to the ways of the world, seemed to feel that these gentlemen were not paying them due respect. She looked at them calmly, yet haughtily, and turned her head away. The gentleman who was talking to Miss Hogg noticed the look and action and thought, "This child has good blood, whatever she may be to the Hoggs," and he felt rebuked by her look of indignation.

"Well, Miss Hogg, since you will not take pity on any of us, we shall leave you to enjoy your ride and we will trot along the best we can;" and raising their hats, they left Miss Hogg to finish her ride, to the great relief of her mother and of Isabelle, who said:

"I don't like those gentlemen, sister Mamie; they might have waited till you asked them, and not proposed to ride with us, and I really don't think they meant it."

"Well," replied Mamie, "you're a wise little lady; perhaps you're right;" and a blush of humiliation came over her face as she thought, "they were only laughing at me, and I was so vain that while talking to them I did n't know it, and Isabelle saw it all the time. O, she must be a real lady herself, or how could she have felt the insult when I did not;" and tears of vexation came to her eyes.

Mrs. Hogg looked at her daughter, who seemed so quiet, and said, "Did you notice while you were talking to those officers, an old gentleman? He came quite close to us and looked at Isabelle so hard that I was afraid he was going to claim her, and O, Mamie, I can't part with her now, it would break my heart."

"Don't fret, dear mamma," said Isabelle, "I will never leave you; no, not even if my own parents were to claim me; they abandoned me for so long they could n't have cared for me; and now that I 'm happy, and you have made me so, I will not go with them."

Mrs. Hogg, with tears in her eyes, kissed her affectionately, saying, "That 's right, my darling, my little queen."

"Do you mean the old man with blue spectacles?" Mamie had asked her mother, for, though she had not noticed him, she guessed that it must be he.

"Yes, Mamie; so you saw him; and yet you were so

busy joking with those young officers that I did n't think you did; you are certainly cute, Mamie; what do you make of him?"

"Well, I really don't know, unless he 's a teacher of music or dancing, and seeing that we are strangers, he intends to ask you for a pupil."

"Perhaps you 're right, still, he did n't say a word to me; he simply stared at Isabelle as if he wished to remember her for some purpose; he did n't look at me."

"O, well, never mind; let the old fellow go to Jericho. I wish I 'd seen him staring at Isabelle; I would have asked him his business in a jiffy, and I guess he would n't have stayed long, the old porpoise!"

"But, my dear," interposed Mrs. Hogg, "do you know him?—and you talk so loud that the coachman is listening, and people look at us as they go by."

"Well, ma, I 'm furious this morning."

"You were all right when we left the hotel."

"Yes, ma, but Isabelle has opened my eyes about these young fellows. To think that they were laughing at me, O, my heart! and me not know it! Well, I should smile! What a fool I am, and I bragged of my cleverness! O, Mamie Hogg, why were you not born a lady?"

"Come, Mamie," said her mother with some dignity, "you seem to forget that I 'm your mother, and though I 'm not a grand lady, my people were and are respectable, though, as your father says, they may not be cute, but they are honest."

"I am sorry I spoke so roughly, ma; you are always so good to me. Shall we go back to the hotel?"

"Yes, I think we had better; I am getting hungry, and Isabelle must feel as if she could eat her dinner, eh, my dear?" patting the child's head.

"Yes, mamma, and I suppose Mamie too; that makes her so cross."

"Well, you little witch," said Miss Hogg, laughing, having regained her usual good humor, "I guess those blue eyes of yours see everything."

The carriage was ordered back to the hotel and dinner was served in a private room, to the great surprise of Mrs. Hogg, who preferred to eat at the *table d'hôte,* where she could converse with her American friends; but Katy ex-

plained that a lot of strange people had arrived during their absence and that she had thought it best to order the dinner in a private room until her mistress could see for herself if she cared to meet them. "That was very considerate of you, Katy, and very wise," said Mrs. Hogg, quite satisfied with the explanation. But Miss Hogg looked inquiringly at Katy, and the latter made her a sign which meant, "You 're right, there 's something up."

After dinner Miss Hogg hurried to her room, where she knew that Katy was awaiting her, and, after locking the door, asked, "What has happened—anything about the detective?"

"Yes, miss, not the one of yesterday, but the one that questioned me about a runaway carriage in the Red Lion Hotel, and approved of the soda water for my husband; he 's well disguised but I know his voice."

"Did he know you?"

"I think not, for I tried to speak in a different voice, and looked as sedate as a nun."

"Did he speak to you?"

"Sure, he did; I was standing just behind him when you rode away, and seeing that he watched the carriage as long as it was in view, I suspected him and stayed on the steps till he turned round to come in; and making him a curtsy, as if I was waiting for him to address me, he looked hard at me, but I looked down modestly. He said, 'Are you a servant from the hotel?' 'Yes, sir,' I answered him in a low voice, which was not all feigned, for I felt my knees trembling. I had recognized Detective Walgrave, and I feared that he had discovered everything and had come to arrest us; but, instead of that, he asked me who were the ladies who had just gone out in a carriage.

'They are Americans, I believe,' I answered. 'And who is the fair little girl with them? I 'll swear that she 's English.' 'She 's a relation of Miss Hogg, I 've heard.' 'Ah, ha! a relation indeed! she don't look like them. Do they dine at the *table d' hôte* or *en famille?*' I did n't understand what he meant, but I said, 'at the *table d' hôte.*' 'Well, my girl, show me the way to the parlor; I 'm going to stay here some time; see that a room is prepared for me.' 'Yes, sir.' And I left him in the parlor, and went to tell Miss Nelly that I had brought her a customer."

"And where is he now?" asked Miss Hogg.

"At the dinner table yet; waiting to see you and the child. That is the reason that I ordered dinner upstairs —to give you time to think what to do, and keep him in suspense for a while, for he is sure that the child is Lady Florence."

"You have acted quite cleverly, Katy; we must hide the child as much as possible for some time yet; he 's sure to force his way somehow, and when he does how blank he 'll look! O, my heart! I must manage to be there. I would n't miss it for the world. And poor ma is as innocent as a lamb. How indignant she will be! And she won't tell who the child is, which will make him feel sure that he 's right; and you 'll see me coming down on him hot, and sending him to the right-about-face in a jiffy. How well he has taken the bait! Well, I should smile! Mind that you watch him and let me know all his movements, and keep quiet or he 'll soon find you out if you begin to laugh and caper with the men servants."

"I could n't do that, Mamie; I 'm too much afraid; he 's too near for me to laugh. I 'll tell the male servants that I 'm very ill if they tease me; that will account for my sedate behavior."

"That 's right. He did n't know you, did he—I mean are you sure he did n't?"

"O, yes, I 'm quite sure. O, if he only knew that it was me who played him that trick!" and she laughed merrily, forgetting her fears for the time being. "You must try and have a look at him, Mamie; he has a long gray beard, and blue spectacles."

"O, I 've seen him already."

"Where have you seen him?"

"On the doorstep as we drove away, and again in the park—at least ma did."

"In the park," repeated Katy; "then he must have left the hotel almost as soon as I had shown him into the parlor; he 's awfully slippery; and, mark my word, he 'll be sure to make trouble for us yet."

"No, he won't, and you need not be so frightened for everything is going as we wished. When he has seen Isabelle he will not be in such a hurry to run us down again."

"Then why not let him see her at once and be done with him," said Katy.

"O my heart! is that you talking, Katy? Don't you see that if he happened to meet us when we have the real Lady Florence with us we would have to make a run for it, and he would think it very strange if we had been so ready to let him see the supposed one? He would put two and two together and suspect the truth in a jiffy. No, let's wait and see what he means to do. Don't let the child go downstairs; watch him, and if he should ask for an interview with ma let me know if I'm in; if I'm not in tell ma that that strange looking old gentleman wishes to see her about the child, and that you had better take her upstairs for fear of his taking her away. She will be so frightened that she will consent at once. Then you take the child to my room and lock her in. Of course you must tell her why you are doing it. Don't frighten her. Then you introduce the detective to ma, and while he's busy talking to her you walk out with Isabelle, go back to Richmond, and wait there till you hear from us. Now I'm going to ma, and prepare her a little or the shock might hurt her."

Miss Hogg returned to her mother and told her that she had seen the same old gentleman they had seen in the park, that he was staying at the same hotel, and that he had been questioning Katy about Isabelle. Mrs. Hogg flushed up and looked greatly troubled, saying, "Well, she's mine, and no one has a right to take her away."

"Certainly not, ma, and you are not to fret; he can't do anything; still, it might be as well to hide Isabelle for a time till we see what his intentions are; don't you think so, ma?"

"Yes, my dear, it will be best."

"Well, if he should ask to see you, before you let him in, ring for Katy, and let her take Isabelle away to Richmond for a few days; and if he should question you, will you tell him where you got her?"

"No, certainly not; I shall never humiliate that sweet child; he can have no right to ask."

"You're quite right, ma, just give it to him hot."

CHAPTER XXV.

At that moment Katy rushed in, and, taking the child in her arms, rushed out again, saying, "That old crank is coming up." And, in fact, she met him face to face at the door; she tried to pass him; he stood in her way, saying, "O, why take the pretty little girl out of the room? I have nothing to say to Mrs. Hogg that she may not hear;" and he tried to see the child's face; but poor Isabelle, who feared being taken away, clung to Katy and hid her face on her breast.

Miss Hogg came to the rescue by advancing to the door and saying, "Well, sir, here 's my mother; if you have any business with her come in, and don't interfere with my sister," gave Katy a push to get her out. Walgrave did not dare to oppose her until he was sure that the child was really Lady Florence. He walked in, and his suspicion became certainty as he saw poor Mrs. Hogg flushed and trembling, unable to utter a word.

Miss Hogg went over to her and said, "Why, ma, what 's the matter with you? Do you know the gentleman? If not, why don't you tell him that you won't be bothered with him?"

"No, my dear, I don't know him, and I will hear what he has to say; but stay with me, Mamie."

"Of course, ma, I 'll stay as long as you wish, and if you 'll let me I 'll talk to this gentleman, instead of you."

"No, young lady, my business is with your mother," said the detective, fearing that Miss Hogg would manage to lead him astray with some of her clever tricks. He was making a great mistake again, for had he discussed the matter in hand with Miss Hogg, she might, through mistake or excitement, have let drop some words that would have thrown light on the disappearance of Lady Florence; while Mrs. Hogg, who was in total ignorance of the affair, would lead him astray more than her daughter could have done with all her cleverness.

Walgrave was surprised to see that Miss Hogg did not try to leave the room, and that she had allowed Lady Florence, if it was she, to be taken in charge by the hotel servant, as he thought Katy to be; for with all his brag that he would bet his head that he would know her again, he had failed to do so. This pretty maid, with deep, quiet blue eyes and black hair, could not be recognized as the sprightly young wife with blue eyes and reddish hair who had deceived him at the Red Lion Hotel.

Mrs. Hogg, reassured by her daughter's presence, said, more calmly than could have been expected from her appearance, "Sir, if you have any business with me will you kindly explain it, for I am at a loss to understand it, as you are a total stranger to me."

"I know that I am, and yet my presence seems to trouble you as if you partly guessed what I have come for. Well, madam, I may as well tell you at once that I am a detective employed by Lady Montgomery to search and find out what has become of her niece, Lady Florence, who disappeared some time ago, and whom I traced here to the hotel."

But if Mr. Walgrave expected Mrs. Hogg to give way entirely under his stern looks and semi-accusation he found himself disappointed, for she seemed quite relieved at the turn the conversation had taken; and as the detective seemed to expect her to say something she said, "I am really sorry for Lady Montgomery, though she did not treat me well after inviting us to visit her."

"O, ho," thought the detective, "we 're coming to it; the cat will soon be out of the bag." He continued: "Did you see the young lady while you were there?"

"If you mean a little girl about eight years old, I did, as we crossed the park—a pretty fair-haired little beauty; I made that remark to my daughter here, did n't I, Mamie?"

"Yes, ma, you did."

Miss Hogg had made up her mind to say as little as possible, fearing that her temper would get the better of her; and she was quite amused watching Walgrave, who, in his turn, watched Mrs. Hogg, expecting her to betray herself every moment. As for her, she had no such fears; she felt quite easy; she knew that the detective would be

yet more puzzled before he had done questioning her mother.

"And did you speak to her?"

"No, we did not; she passed us on her white horse; that's all. And you say that she's lost? But did n't you say something to the effect that you have found her in this hotel, so that it will be all right now, won't it?" And she looked innocently at the detective, who changed color and looked daggers at poor Mrs. Hogg, who was at a loss to know how she had offended him. He thought she was mocking him and defying him. He would accuse her of having taken the child and keeping her in hiding and see how she would like it. In fact, her emotion as he had entered the room justified him in his belief that Isabelle was Lady Florence.

While these thoughts passed through his mind, Mrs. Hogg, though very patient, was feeling indignant at his looks, and she said: "Why have you come to me with Lady Montgomery's troubles? Of course I am pleased that she has found her niece again if she had lost her, but I don't think that gives you the right to come to me in my private room and look and act as if I had insulted you."

The detective was nonplused; he felt hot and cold, and hardly knew where he stood, for there was no mistaking Mrs. Hogg's sincerity unless she was a perfect actress and had nerves of iron, and he could not believe that, having seen her distress at the sight of him.

Miss Hogg had hard work to keep from laughing outright—the situation was so comical. Walgrave looked from mother to daughter, and saw that Miss Hogg was amused but not uneasy. What was he to think? He must speak out at all hazards, even if it turned out that the young lady he had seen was not Lady Florence; but she must be—the age, the golden hair, though the hair had been cut; the aristocratic beauty of the child—everything combined, reassured him and gave him courage to speak.

"Madam," he said, "will you inform me who that child is that I saw as I came in?"

Mrs. Hogg began to look troubled; but the question had no effect on Miss Hogg except to send her into a fit of laughter, to the great astonishment of Walgrave, who was getting dazed. He never had had a case like this before.

He had felt so sure that he was on the right tack, but now he doubted it one moment, and the next he called himself a fool for doubting; and seeing Mrs. Hogg's embarrassment strengthened him in his belief.

Mrs. Hogg had not answered and he repeated, "Tell me who that child is and I will relieve you of my presence."

"You have no right to ask me and I will not tell you."

"But, madam, if I tell you that I believe her to be Lady Florence then you will answer me."

"What! My Isabelle, Lady Florence?"

"Yes, madam; though now that I have seen you I give you credit for not being aware of the fact. You have been imposed upon." And he looked at Miss Hogg, whose only answer was another peal of laughter.

"My dear Mamie, how can you laugh so when you see me in distress about our dear Isabelle?"

"You need not distress yourself, ma; this gentleman is only making a mistake, that 's all."

"Well, young lady, if I am making a mistake prove it to me by letting me see and speak to the young lady."

"Well, I like your cheek to come here and give us orders; you must be crazy; who are you, anyhow? A detective, you said; all bosh, I say; more likely you 've heard that we are rich and you want to blackmail us; that 's it; you don't look like an honest man with your false beard and blue spectacles, and if you don't leave this room I 'll send for a policeman. Now I guess you 'd better go; you 've said more than enough already," as Walgrave was about to speak, and, ringing the bell, she said to the servant who answered it, "Show this man out; he has insulted us."

Walgrave had certainly not expected to be turned out in such a high handed manner—Miss Hogg's black eyes flashing and her large white hand pointing to the door, for she had risen, and she stood there as tall as he, and looking almost as strong. He had to go, for he was not sure enough to accuse her openly, and he had no warrant to search for the young lady.

As the owner of the hotel came up to see what had happened in his usually quiet hotel, Miss Hogg, looking

the picture of indignation, addressed him before Walgrave could do so, as he had intended,—"Look here, sir, this here fellow has forced himself into our private room and insulted us, I believe, with the intention of frightening us women into giving him money; he 's a blackmailer, and in disguise, too; look here." And before Walgrave could prevent her she had given a tug to his false beard with such force that it came off into her hand, exposing his bruised face to all present. Miss Hogg was as much surprised as the rest of them, for there was no mistaking the bruises; they were real, and no mistake.

"Well, my fine fellow, I have a good mind to send for the police," said the hotel keeper. "How dare you come into a respectable place like this and try your tricks on my lodgers—on ladies too? Now you be off, or I 'll have you kicked out!"

Walgrave was certainly disconcerted. If he had been able to retain his disguise he could have faced the hotel keeper and explained matters to him; but what could he do with a bruised face as he had? No one would believe him; still, he had his badge; he must show it to the hotel keeper and at least prove that he was a detective, even if he had a bruised face; so he said, "I 'm a detective; that 's the cause of my disguise; and as for my bruised face I got it trying to arrest a rogue a few days ago. Those things will happen to men of our calling."

The hotel keeper began to look grave and did n't know what to do. He said, "If you are really what you say, prove it by showing us your badge."

"That 's what I 'm going to do," and he felt in his pocket for it but it was not there; and yet he was sure it was there less than an hour ago.

He began to look blank and Miss Hogg finished him by saying, "It 's all sham; you see that he has no badge."

"True enough," said the hotel keeper, "the lady is right."

Walgrave was furious. Where could his badge be? Miss Hogg could have enlightened him on that point, for after pulling off his false beard she had dropped it at his feet, and Walgrave had bent down to pick it up; in so doing he had dropped his badge from his breast pocket, and Miss Hogg, having put her foot on it unnoticed by any-

one, had it safe for the time being, and was enjoying Walgrave's disappointment and furious looks, for somehow he seemed to hold Miss Hogg responsible for the loss of his badge; yet he could not have explained why; she had not been near enough to him to take it, and even if she had she could not have done it without his knowledge; he had to admit that even to himself. She must be a witch—a she-devil.

"Do you wish to have this man arrested?" asked the hotel keeper, addressing Miss Hogg.

"O, no, let him go;" she said good-naturedly. She was too cute not to know that Walgrave could soon have proved that he was a detective, if they sent for the police, and she wished to appear kind and forgiving in the eyes of every one present. She also longed to pick up that badge, and wished everybody was gone.

As for Walgrave, as soon as Miss Hogg had said that she did n't wish him to be detained, he had stuck on his beard again and walked downstairs, saying, "I will soon see you again, Miss Hogg."

"Really," said the hotel keeper, "he did n't deserve any mercy at your hands, Miss Hogg; you have been too lenient to the fellow; however, if he shows himself here again I 'll take him in hand and he won't get away so cheaply."

Miss Hogg and her mother were left alone, the latter looking pale and frightened. After picking up the badge and dropping it into her pocket, Miss Hogg closed the door, and seating herself by her mother tried to cheer her, telling her that the man was a cheat and she must n't mind him; he could n't take Isabelle away from her; if he tried to do it they would appeal to the American consul, and he would make it all right.

"Yes, you 're right, Mamie; you think of everything, my dear, while I only fret. Now go and see after Isabelle."

"Yes, ma, but she 's not here. I told Katy to take her to Richmond. Do you wish me to go there and see if she 's safe?"

"Yes, Mamie, if you don't mind the trouble."

"No, I don't, so good by, and mind you don't fret; I 'll take care of her, never fear."

Miss Hogg was pleased that her mother had sent her to look after Isabelle's safety, for she was very anxious to

know if everything was right with Katy. Suppose she had been followed. Of course, no harm could come to either, as it was not Lady Florence; but still she wished to keep up the deception, though she saw clearly that it would not be for long, with men like Walgrave and Mathew after them. She did not know the latter by name, but she knew that he was a shrewd fellow. How strange that these two clever men had bruised faces!—for now she believed Katy—that Mathew's face was really bruised. Poor devils, she thought, they have hard times, I guess; and this poor fellow whom I have exposed as an impostor, how he must have felt; and yet he was only doing his duty. And how well dear ma played her part! I had to laugh or I would have burst;" and she laughed again at the remembrance of the scene she had just witnessed.

CHAPTER XXVI.

We shall leave Miss Hogg going to Richmond, where another scene is awaiting her, and follow Mr. Walgrave, who has never felt so enraged in all his life—and so tricked—for he felt sure that the child he had seen was Lady Florence, and he was sorry he had not stopped the maid at all hazards. Now it was too late, but he would have the hotel watched so that she could not leave it without his knowledge. He little knew that she had already left. So he sent one of the cabmen with a note to the captain of police asking him for two detectives to watch the hotel while he went to change his disguise and get a warrant to search for the child. He remained about the hotel till he saw the detectives coming; then he walked away without paying any attention to them, and in less than an hour he had returned with a warrant and a new badge, which had cost him much trouble; he ought not to have lost his badge; if it was found by some dishonest person it might be made use of for bad purposes.

Walgrave was now disguised with a long brown beard, for he had to wear something that would hide his bruised face. After having ascertained that neither the child, Miss Hogg, nor her mother had been seen to leave, he went straight to the office and asked to see the proprietor; the clerk rang for him and he soon made his appearance. Walgrave did not give him time to speak for he saw that he was recognized; but he said, "I must have a private interview with you. See this paper," showing him the warrant to search for the missing child who was supposed to be in the hotel.

"Come this way;" said the hotel keeper, for he saw that something was going on in his hotel unknown to him. When Walgrave found himself alone with him he showed him his badge, proving that he was a detective, and he explained in a few words that he was Walgrave, the detective employed in the search for Lady Montgomery's niece for whom such a large reward was offered.

"O, I know; I've seen it in the papers; and do you mean to say that Mrs. Hogg's pretty little girl is Lady Florence? How came she by her? The child is fond of her and does n't seem to be detained against her will."

"I can't explain, but I 'm sure that it 's her. That was the object of my first visit; I never insulted Miss Hogg, but simply asked her mother to allow me to see the child, and Miss Hogg turned on me like a fury, and got the best of me, too, as you saw for yourself. I believe she herself took the child away. The mother is innocent, I believe; her daughter has deceived her in some way."

"But that is all very absurd," replied the hotel keeper; "she can't expect to retain the child long; and to bring her here so openly too! I think you will find out that you are mistaken; it cannot be!"

"Well, we shall see," replied Walgrave. "Why did they refuse to let me see her?"

"Yes, that looks bad, but yet it can't be!"

"Well, we 'll soon see. I have a warrant, and you must accompany me."

"I will; it is my duty."

They both went up to Mrs. Hogg's rooms. She was resting after her excitement, the chambermaid said, when asked by her master to tell Mrs. Hogg that he would like to see her for a moment on matters of importance.

"Go back," replied her master, "and tell her that I am exceedingly sorry, but that it is absolutely necessary that I should speak to her or to her daughter."

Mrs. Hogg appeared at the door looking flushed and very weary.

"What is it that you want with me? I am far from well, and wanted to rest."

"I must apologize for disturbing you, but this matter is forced upon me; I have no alternative. This gentleman," pointing to Walgrave, "insists on seeing the young lady."

"But he cannot and shall not," she replied, excitedly. "She is mine, and he shall not take her away from me; she is not Lady Florence, but my own dear Isabelle. I shall appeal to our consul to protect me against these intrusions; the man must be a madman!"

"No, madam, I am not mad," said Walgrave, "and I give you credit for being sincere in all you say; but you have been deceived; that child is really Lady Florence."

"And by whom have I been deceived?"

"By your own daughter, whom we suspect of having taken the young lady away."

"What! by Mamie!" she cried, excitedly. "Why, it was I that—that"—and she stopped short, fearing that she had said too much.

"Surely you don't mean to say that you took her away yourself?" asked Walgrave, puzzled again as Mrs. Hogg began to cry; but he could get no answer from her.

The hotel keeper, fearing that she would go into hysterics, interposed, saying: "My dear madam, don't excite yourself; there must be some mistake; if you would only let this gentleman see the child everything would be clear at once, since she is not the young lady he is looking for; so do, for your own sake and peace of mind, ring for your maid to bring her here, and I pledge you my word that the child shall not be removed from here till Lady Montgomery comes and recognizes her herself. Now will you permit me to ring, madam?"

"I believe you," said Mrs. Hogg, wiping her eyes. "I wish I could do as you advise, but she is not here."

"What!" said Walgrave, "not here! Do you mean that the child has left the hotel? Impossible! I had the hotel watched during my absence for the warrant. And where is Miss Hogg? Perhaps gone, also, you will say."

"Yes, you are quite right; she went away half an hour ago, and more."

"O, this is too much! And I believed you had been imposed upon. I believe now that you are an accomplice in this matter, and I insist on your producing the child. I have a warrant here that gives me the right to search the hotel, and I will do it."

Mrs. Hogg, who was really an honest and upright woman, felt the insult deeply; looking up at Walgrave with dignity, and more calmly than might have been expected after the exciting scenes she was passing through, she said: "Since my word goes for nothing in your opinion, and you have a warrant to search my apartments, do so; begin

by searching this one so that I may be allowed to rest, and don't come back to me concerning Lady Montgomery's niece. Isabelle is not her niece. If you want proof of that go to the American consul and he will inform you that Isabelle is mine. Now come in and search;" opening the door wide for them to enter. Turning to the hotel keeper, she said, "You may not be to blame in this affair, still, as soon as my daughter returns we shall leave here; I will not stay a day longer in your hotel."

"I am sorry, madam, and believe me, I am not to blame; but I can't prevent a search or I would do it."

Walgrave had entered the room, but had seen at a glance that Lady Florence was not there, and he soon came out, not knowing what to make of Mrs. Hogg; she seemed so sincere in what she said. He bowed to her and followed the hotel keeper upstairs. Mrs. Hogg, closing her door and locking it, dropped into an easy chair, quite exhausted and very much pained to have been accused of stealing the child. Why should they accuse her or her daughter? She had never given them cause to do so; why, it would have been madness to do so; she would have been found out. And what did she want with a child like Lady Florence, who would never love her, or be grateful to her for having taken her away from her people? Why, the man must be mad! She fell asleep and dreamed that Mamie had been arrested and hanged for murdering Lady Florence; she awoke with a scream and saw Mamie bending over her, almost as frightened as she herself was, for she had not been able to awaken her mother by knocking at her door, which was locked, and she had gone down to the clerk for a key to open it. A man servant had been sent up with her to help her, and he had knocked off Mrs. Hogg's key from the lock inside and then opened the door with his key.

Miss Hogg was in great fear. Had her mother fainted, or was she perhaps dead? When she had heard her scream she had run to her with her heart in her mouth, and throwing her arms around her, had said, "What 's the matter, ma, are you ill?"

Mrs. Hogg looked around her and seeing her daughter, said, "O, Mamie, they did n't hang you for murdering

Lady Florence? This is really you, my dear? I must have dreamed it."

"Poor ma! It is the fear of losing Isabelle that has made you have such an awful dream!"

"Perhaps so, my dear." And she told her daughter what had happened during her absence, and her intention of leaving the hotel, of which Miss Hogg approved.

CHAPTER XXVII.

After leaving her mother, Miss Hogg put on her hat and coat and had almost reached the front door when through the glass she saw Walgrave standing on the step looking up and down the road as if expecting some one, and she guessed at once that the hotel was going to be watched, and that she had better try to get out before he got reinforcements, and as there were three doors it would be quite possible to escape as long as there was only Walgrave to watch; he was standing at the door nearer Russell Square, so she went to the other end and watched for Walgrave to turn his head toward Russell Square, which he often did, seemingly expecting some one from that quarter; then, before he could turn round, she ran down the steps and up those of the next house, where she remained and saw the two detectives relieve Walgrave, one of them planting himself where Walgrave had stood, and the other at the door she had just passed through, and, facing each other, they could both see the middle door, so that there was no chance to leave the hotel without being seen by both. Miss Hogg laughed to herself at the trick she was playing them, and as soon as Walgrave had disappeared toward Russell Square she ran down the steps and actually looked into the detective's face. He saw her, but not knowing Miss Hogg, and having no order to stop anyone from anywhere but the hotel, he let her pass. She walked two blocks, then took a cut to the underground railway to go to Richmond and find out whether Katy and Isabelle had arrived safely. We shall leave her thinking of the scenes she had passed through that day, and return to Mathew.

The day after Miss Hogg eluded him, as we have already told, he rested until afternoon; he then disguised himself, using a long, fair beard, to hide his features; he could not remain at home, for he felt sure that Walgrave would steal a march on him, for he did n't believe that he, Walgrave, would stay at home, as he had advised,

him, Mathew, to do; so he was not surprised when he saw him enter the hotel in the guise of an old man. He knew him at once by his walk.

"O," thought Mathew, "you have deceived me; but wait; I 'll watch my chance to step into your shoes."

A carriage stopped at the hotel; he turned; he recognized Miss Hogg and a middle-aged lady—her mother, perhaps—and a lovely little girl, who must be Lady Florence; but he was too late; Walgrave was ahead of him; it would not improve matters were he to go in, so he would stay about the hotel to see how Walgrave would manage. No one would notice him for there are always one or two gentlemen standing at the doors; he would be supposed to reside at the hotel.

An hour went by and Walgrave did not appear, but Katy and the young lady did, and, calling a cab, they drove rapidly away; Mathew hailed another and followed. "Ah, ha!" thought he, "I 'm not far behind you, Mr. Walgrave; you are looking after Miss Hogg, who is giving you the slip by sending her maid with the child to some place of concealment, and is now entertaining you with all kinds of stories to give her maid time to get away; and I, whom you have kept in the dark, am on her track and will not lose sight if her until I have her and the child safe."

They had not far to go, for Katy was going to the underground railway. She arrived just as a train was leaving, and she boarded it without tickets. Mathew tried to follow but he tripped over the legs of a clumsy fellow sitting on a bench, and he measured his length on the floor. The fellow helped him up, and, of course, was very sorry, but when Mathew regained his legs the train was disappearing in the dark tunnel. "Well, I 'm unlucky, and no mistake," he murmured; "if that clumsy fool had n't knocked me down I would be on the train with them and they could n't have escaped me; but now what am I to do? If I take the next train, which passes in an hour, I won't know where to get down, for she did n't buy a ticket, so I can't find out what station she 's bound for; still, I must start; it will take time, for I shall have to get down at every station and inquire if they have been seen. I see no other way, and I may as well take it coolly as to get into a rage as Walgrave would be sure to have

done if he had been in my place. I wonder how he is faring down there with Miss Hogg! I doubt if he is much better off than I am."

Mathew had sat down on one of the benches to wait for the next train, and as he thought over past events he felt that he had never before been in such a complicated case. He could not see Miss Hogg's motives in taking the child, if she had done so, and apparently she had; she certainly was both clever and brave, and had eluded them so far, but they were closing in upon her; it was only a matter of a few days at the most, perhaps hours.

The train whistle was heard; he went to the office for his ticket and as he stood there awaiting his turn he could no longer complain that his luck had deserted him, for there stood Miss Hogg buying a ticket for Paddington; she did n't notice him, but looked behind her several times. Mathew purchased his ticket for the same place, and followed Miss Hogg to make sure that she was really going. When he had seen her safe in one of the carriages he got into the next and watched at every station to see that she did not escape him.

Miss Hogg, feeling sure that she had not been followed, felt easy in mind, not expecting, of course, that anyone was waiting at the station, for how could anyone know where she was going? If Katy had been followed they would have gone after her, and not remained on the platform; so she was safe so far; still, when she got off the train she walked briskly on till she had left the station; then she turned sharply round and met Mathew face to face; he had not expected her to look around, and he had kept rather too close to her, fearing to lose her in the crowd.

It was evening now, but the bright gaslight made everything as light as day. Miss Hogg did not recognize Mathew in his new disguise, but as their eyes met he had half stopped. That was enough for her; she guessed he was a detective on her track; she had seen those bright black eyes before; but where? for she did not remember the man. This one looked like a gentleman; he was tall and slight; in fact, a good looking man; she would have another look at him, for his eyes haunted her; so she retraced her steps and passed him, looking boldly into his

face; he could not escape her, for he could not expect her to come back on her steps, and somehow, he could not have explained it to himself, but he seemed forced to return her look, by her stronger will, and as he did so a smile of recognition came into Miss Hogg's face, for she had noticed the redness in the white of his eyes, and also some of the bruises showing above the fair beard. "Ah, ha," thought she, "my friend with the bruised face; the loafer of yesterday; I must say that he has improved; he 's really handsome since he has lost that big stomach of his; I would never have known him but for the look he gave me. Well, I 'm going to have fun with you for a little while longer; then the grand *dénouement*. O, my heart, but won't you look blank when you see Isabelle! and as you don't know Lady Florence you will make sure that it is she, and I 'll have no one see her except Lady Montgomery. O, my lady, what a disappointment is in store for you when you have made sure of getting your niece back and me well punished! I will turn upon you and claim damages for false accusation, and that will be Isabelle's dowry. I guess I know what I 'm about; I 'm not my father's daughter for nothing. I take after him, and I 'm cute, and understand business. Every one will take my part in this affair—our consul most of all. O, my heart, if he only knew the truth would n't he turn hot on me! But I 'll send ma to speak to him, and of course he 'll believe her, for she 'll tell him the truth as far as she knows it. Poor ma! what a game I 'm making her play! What fun I 'm getting out of all of them! I ought to have been a chief of detectives; I have a decided capacity for that calling."

She called a passing cab, after assuring herself that there was not a second one near. She got in, and the cabby asked, "Where to, mum?"

"To one of the best shops you know; I 'm a stranger here."

"What kind of shop, mum?"

"A millinery shop, of course; you don't suppose I mean a beer shop, do you?"

"Yes, mum—no, mum." And jumping on his box, he drove rapidly away, and Miss Hogg, who had not lost sight of Mathew, had the pleasure of seeing him run full

speed after the cab, not having been able to get one to follow her. Miss Hogg glued her eyes to the little back window of the cab and laughed heartily. Some boys called to the cabman to stop, that a gentleman wanted him, but he only whipped behind, as he understood that some one was hanging behind his cab, for the noise of his cab and the busy wagons just passing kept him from hearing.

Mathew no longer hid himself; he knew that he had been recognized; all he cared for was not to lose sight of Miss Hogg; and yet he could hardly expect her to go right to Lady Florence with him following a few steps behind. No, he was too wise for that; he knew that she would try to give him the slip, and he would pretend that she had done so by keeping out of her sight; and he would follow her to Lady Florence's, go in boldly, and never leave her until everything was cleared up. There was no other way; for if he only tracked her to the house and then went for assistance, she was sure to give him the slip; and how long would it be before he would have another such chance as the present one? And the reward was great—one thousand pounds— and he would get it all; it would be a fortune for him, and what a name he would have made! he would be sure of promotion, and would be the equal of Walgrave, who had been a detective for twenty years, and he was not yet thirty years old.

All these thoughts passed through his mind as he ran, and such a prospect was worth running for; still, he was glad when the cab stopped and Miss Hogg got down and walked into the shop; he also walked in, taking no more notice of her, but walking to the back of the shop, he asked for some handkerchiefs; he was told that they did n't keep gentlemen's handkerchiefs; he walked out.

His motive had been to see if the shop had any back entrance; he saw that it had. What was he to do? He could not watch at both entrances; but Mathew was a man of great resources; he was not going to be beaten; so he walked past the cabman, saying as he did so, "If you want to earn five shillings, follow me just a few yards from here."

The cabman, who was walking up and down, waiting for Miss Hogg, took the hint, for he saw that there

was something up, and in one of his walks he stopped where Mathew was waiting for him.

"Look here, cabby," said Mathew, hurriedly, showing him his badge, "I want to find out where this lady lives; you take her home, then come back for me to the back entrance of this shop; here's five shillings and I'll give you five more when you've taken me to her. Now go back to your cab or she'll miss you."

"All right, sir, I'll do it."

Mathew, having made sure of the chief entrance, turned to the back, hoping that she had not already left. He had to walk at least two blocks in going round. If he had ever hurried in his life he did so then, and he was rewarded by seeing Miss Hogg coming toward the door; he managed to show himself, yet pretending to hide, for he wanted her to go back to her cab. He hid in a doorway as if waiting for her. She actually opened the door and looked out. Would she dare come out, knowing that he was there, for he was sure that she had seen him. But no; she only looked up and down the dark street, and not seeing Mathew she felt sure that he had not wanted her to see him and was now in hiding, hoping that he had not been noticed by her. So having satisfied herself that Mathew must be there, she re-entered the shop, saying, "This is the wrong entrance," and going rapidly to the front door to offset Mathew she hurriedly got into the cab, saying, "To Richmond, Bellevue Cottage, as fast as you can." The driver whipped up his horses with a will, having in view another five shillings.

Miss Hogg kept looking out of the back window, but did not see anyone following, either on foot or in a cab, and she felt sure that she had again fooled the detective, though she didn't care how soon he found her out, for this was getting dull; she wanted something more exciting.

She arrived safe at the old lodgings, paid the cabman and dismissed him. Using her latchkey she entered her rooms and found Katy and Isabelle quite safe. They had supper, and Miss Hogg reported all that had occurred between Walgrave, her mother, and herself, laughing merrily all the while. She showed the badge and said,

"Who knows if one day I may not want this; I'll keep it in case I do."

During all this long talk, Isabelle, not understanding a word of it, had lain down on the sofa and gone to sleep, for she had no fears, nor did she know that they were keeping her in hiding; she did not awake even when a loud knock came to the front door, but Miss Hogg changed color, and Katy began to tremble.

"Now don't be a fool," said Miss Hogg; "they don't want Isabelle, and we are going to prove to them that they are mistaken, and make them pay for it too; so you keep cool, Katy."

Yes, it was Mathew knocking; the treacherous cabman had betrayed her to him for ten shillings, thinking to himself, "This American lady must be a shoplifter if the detectives are after her; she looks bold enough for anything;" and he had hurried back to fetch him and bring him to the house, though it was after eleven o'clock. He had not hesitated to knock, for he feared that Walgrave would make his appearance and snatch the prize from his grasp at the last moment, for he was on the right tack now unless he had lost the scent, which was not likely for an old hunter like him. Mathew's knock brought the landlady's head out of an upper window; she asked who it was and what was wanted.

"I am Mathew, the detective, and must see you on important business; sorry to disturb you, but it can't be put off."

The landlady's head disappeared and soon the front door was opened by her, herself. She looked very much flurried and uneasy; no detective had ever called on her before; what could have happened? Her only tenants were Mrs. Hogg, family, and servant; still, a detective, calling so late at night, or even in the daytime, gives people a feeling of fear and uneasiness, let them be ever so free from guilt. She asked Mathew his business.

He began by showing her his badge, and asked for Miss Hogg—to be shown to her rooms.

"It is quite impossible," she replied, "at this hour of the night; call to-morrow morning, and I will do so with pleasure, though I am at a loss to know what you can want with her. They are Americans and strangers here."

"I know all about that, and even if she were in bed I would insist upon seeing her; so show me the rooms and leave the rest to me."

"But, my dear sir, they are my lodgers, and I cannot have them insulted by allowing a man to go to their rooms in the middle of the night, even if he is a detective, unless I know the reason why, as it is my right."

"Well, madam, Miss Hogg is accused of kidnapping a young lady about eight years old."

"You don't mean it! That lovely, fair little girl?"

"The same; and I have traced her here."

"Yes, the child came back this afternoon with her maid, and Miss Hogg has not been in long herself."

"That 's it; I 've been following her, and now that I have her under my thumb I 'm not going to risk losing her by waiting till to-morrow;—do you understand me now?—after hunting for her for more than a week."

"But was not the child missed at once?" asked the landlady. "Why did n't you follow at once?"

"We did, madam; the very night she disappeared."

"But, sir, this young lady has been here more than a month; she was brought here for quiet, as she had been ill."

The detective looked at her and thought she had been paid to put him on the wrong track; and he thought, "I 'm not going to waste more time explaining, perhaps giving Miss Hogg time to escape me," so he said, "Show me to her room; I 'll take all the responsibility." The landlady obeyed, protesting all the time. She knocked at Miss Hogg's dining room, and was pleased to see that she was there, it being so late she had feared that she had retired.

"Come in," said a loud voice, and she entered, making many apologies for allowing a visitor to come up at that hour of the night.

"Well, who wants me?"

"This gentleman, miss; do you wish me to stay or shall I leave you?"

"No, you had better stay and hear what he has to say. I have no secrets. Well, sir, what is the meaning of this intrusion?"

Mathew walked into the room and thought, "Is she going to keep me here talking while the maid takes

another trip with the child, as she did to Walgrave?" But as he looked around he felt reassured, for the maid was there, and the little girl was fast asleep on the sofa. "O, I 'm all right this time; Miss Hogg may escape me; I can't retain her forcibly, having no warrant; but as for Lady Florence I won't lose sight of her under any inducement; so, Miss Hogg, clever as you are, you don't make me leave this room without that child." That 's what he thought. What he said was, "What I have to say to you is most important for me to say, or for you to hear."

"O, bosh! don't beat about the bush, but come to the point at once. What do you want?"

"This young lady," pointing to the sofa; "Lady Montgomery's niece, whom you have abducted. That is my business with you, Miss Hogg."

"Well, I never! I must say that you don't want much; anything else you claim here? Don't you want my maid too?"

"I 'm not joking, Miss Hogg; I mean what I say."

"And so do I," replied Miss Hogg, in a loud voice; "and I like your cheek to come here and tell me that my sister is Lady Florence; you must have the jimjams, my good fellow, and I defy you to lay a finger on her to take her from here. Do you hear? Now do your worst, and make haste about it for I want to go back to my mother."

The landlady was shocked at the unladylike speech of Miss Hogg, who always used strong language when excited. Mathew remained calm under this fire, and said, "Miss Hogg, I am positive that this young lady is Lady Montgomery's niece, and I will not lose sight of her until you prove to me that she is not."

"O, my heart, but the man's a fool! I have no need to prove anything; it is you, yourself, who will have to prove your claim to her. Do you know Lady Florence? If so, look and see for yourself that this child is not she."

"Unfortunately I do not," he replied; "I must send for some one who does."

"Well, look here, young man, I 'm not going to allow you to bring Tom, Dick, and Harry here to swear that

my sister is Lady Florence; don't think it. I want Lady Montgomery to call here, and if she claims her as her niece I am satisfied. Now what are you going to do about it?"

"Stay here and notify her ladyship to come to town, for we have found her niece, but that you will not deliver her to anyone but herself."

"That 's right, my good fellow, and let me tell you that you are making it hot for Lady Montgomery, for I shall claim damages for the way I have been followed and insulted this past week. And remember that this young lady is not Lady Florence, as you will find to your cost, I warn you! And I will not have this child frightened. You will allow my maid to put her to bed and to stay with her. You can guard the door outside."

"Yes; while your maid makes her escape with the child through the window. No, Miss Hogg, I can't allow the child to leave my sight."

"You will have to; and if you have any fear of her escaping by the window, guard it also; but I promise that the child shall not be removed until Lady Montgomery has seen her. You talk like a madman; why should I want Lady Montgomery's niece?"

Mathew could find no answer to this, for he had asked himself the same question many times, and had not been able to answer it.

Turning to Katy, Miss Hogg said, "Now you take that child to bed, and mind you don't leave her a moment; and when Lady Montgomery comes let me know; don't let her see Isabelle in my absence. As for me, I must go back to my mother."

A step was heard on the stairs, and a man entered the room hurriedly, not seeing Mathew, who was hidden by the door; as it opened, the newcomer, who seemed very much out of breath, looked all around the room, and, as he saw Isabelle fast asleep, said with a smile, "At last I have run down my game."

"Not so, Mr. Walgrave," said Mathew; "you are poaching on my preserves."

"You here, Mathew!" said Walgrave, in surprise and disappointment, for he saw the reward escaping him.

"Yes, Mr. Walgrave, and I am glad that you have come.

I was about to send for help to see that no one leaves this house."

"Well, I 'm going to leave the house," said Miss Hogg, "and I should like to see the fellow who is going to prevent me. I must go back to the hotel."

When Walgrave was told how matters stood he thought, "Miss Hogg has got to the end of her rope, means to leave the child here and decamp; but she won't. I 'll be her escort." So he said, "Well, Mathew, since you were here first you have the best claim. You stay here and I will escort Miss Hogg back to her hotel, and I will send you a couple of men in case of need; but I don't think you 'll have any more trouble. I will also send a telegram to Lady Montgomery asking her to come to London at once, that her niece is found at last."

Miss Hogg, enjoying their obstinacy, consented to leave the house with Walgrave, knowing that the more they insulted her the greater the damages she would have the right to claim; so she returned to her mother. as we have seen.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

But how did it happen that Walgrave had found his way to Richmond so soon after Mathew had left him going upstairs with the hotel keeper to search Miss Hogg's bedroom? Of course there was no one in it, but the detective's sharp eyes traveled around the room in search of a clew, and as he was on the point of leaving Miss Hogg's bedroom, he noticed a piece of wrapping paper on the bed, looking as if its contents had been removed in a hurry, and the paper left there. He had it in his hands in a moment, examining it carefully, and he was rewarded by reading on it the address, "Miss Hogg, Bellevue Cottage, Richmond." "Ha, ha," he thought; "they must have lived there, and there is a chance that Miss Hogg has taken the child there; it's worth looking after;" and he had gone to Richmond, reaching there shortly after Mathew, as we have recorded, and his disappointment was great when he saw that Mathew had got ahead of him. Poor Walgrave was certainly not in luck; everything seemed to turn in Mathew's favor.

On his way to the hotel with Miss Hogg, Walgrave telegraphed to Lady and Lord Montgomery that Lady Florence was found, and asked them to wire back what time the next day he might expect them at Paddington Station; he would be on hand to take them to her; she was well, he had seen her himself. Miss Hogg looked over his shoulder without any ceremony as he filled the form, and said, "You are dooming Lady Montgomery to great disappointment, though you don't think so."

"All right, young lady, we shall see; to-morrow will decide."

They returned to the cab, and were driven to the hotel, and it was after one o'clock when he left Miss Hogg at her door. She was surprised to see a light in the dining room, and, trying the door, found it locked, as we have already seen.

The next day Miss Hogg sent for one of the best

lawyers, explained matters to him, and asked him what amount of damages she should claim, not that she cared for the money, but, as Lady Montgomery deserved to be punished for it, it was the only way she could do it. She would pay the lawyer well for his trouble, for she was rich.

"Well, madam," he replied, "this is a very extraordinary case, and if you are positive that the young lady is not Lady Florence you certainly have a right to claim a large sum—say three or four thousand pounds—and you will get it too, without going to court. I 'll manage the business for you. I will interview Lady Montgomery's lawyer and make them come down with what we ask for or publish the whole affair in the newspapers."

"I had rather not have it in the newspapers," replied Miss Hogg. "I have no desire to attract attention, and have every one staring at me when I go out; and as for being sure that my sister is not Lady Florence, the best proof of that is my sending for you."

"Very true, madam; then we shall have to wait until Lady Montgomery has seen the young lady."

"Certainly; we expect her this afternoon. I am going to Richmond, under the care of Detective Walgrave, who intends to have me arrested should the young lady prove to be Lady Florence. Now I want you to accompany us and be a witness. You will also be able to ask Lady Montgomery her lawyer's name and address, and to give her a hint of what we intend to do."

"Why, Miss Hogg, I see that you are quite a business woman, which certainly gives me great pleasure, for usually it is so hard to make ladies understand law business. I have spent hours explaining, and when I have thought I had made it all clear, they would ask a question showing that they had not understood one word."

"O, my heart! but they must have been fools, those ladies," said Miss Hogg, with a laugh.

The lawyer looked hard at her, for so far she had acted pretty well; and he thought, "She 's a clever woman and quick at understanding, but she is coarse, and decidedly not a lady; still, she can't have taken the child or she would not have sent for me to claim damages."

"Well, Miss Hogg, what time shall I meet you at Richmond?"

Miss Hogg showed her cleverness by answering, "You had better stay in the hotel; it is now ten o'clock and Walgrave is waiting to learn of Lady Montgomery's arrival; she is to wire to him from Paddington Station to meet her at the Royal Hotel, as she did not care to have him come to the station, fearing publicity. If you stay here we can start together."

"Is your mother coming?"

"I guess not; I have n't told her yet that I 'm being watched and am not allowed to leave the hotel; nor that Isabelle is also kept a prisoner; she would fret her heart out if she knew it. I 'm going to her now, and if I 'm wanted send for me quietly, for poor ma must not be worried. When everything is over I will tell her, but not now."

She left the lawyer to go to her mother. She told her that she intended to go to Isabelle that afternoon.

"I think I 'll go too, Mamie; I miss her so much."

"I would n't if I were you," answered her daughter. "Wait till I get some nice furnished rooms somewhere about here; then you can have her with you all the time; that fellow who wanted to claim her is still in this hotel, but I hear that he is going to-night for good."

"All right, Mamie; you 're so headstrong that there 's no going against you, so I 'll stay, but don't be gone long."

"No, ma, I 'll be back soon."

Hearing a knock at the door she rose, and there met a servant, and knowing her errand, she silenced her with a look, and left the room; but Mrs. Hogg had seen her and asked her what she wanted; "Only to see after the fire, mum," answered the maid, cutely.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Miss Hogg, her lawyer, Mr. Bridgewell, and the detective, reached Bellevue Cottage safely. Walgrave, leaving Miss Hogg in the care of Mathew, departed to fetch Lady Montgomery, who was waiting for him at the Royal Hotel, accompanied by her son. As soon as she saw the detective she said, "You are sure that it is Lady Florence?"

"Yes, my lady, a fair-haired little beauty; it must be her, though Miss Hogg denies it firmly, and has brought a lawyer with her."

"Where is she?"

"At Bellevue Cottage with Lady Florence. Mathew is guarding her and will not allow the child to be removed until you have seen her."

"Well, let us go," said the captain. "I long to make sure that it is my cousin whom you have found."

"So do I," said her ladyship.

Entering the carriage that was waiting for them, they were soon at Bellevue Cottage. The landlady received them at the door and invited Lady Montgomery and the captain into the drawing-room, but her ladyship refused, saying, "Let us go at once to my niece; I long to see her; I hope, and yet I fear."

The landlady led the way upstairs, and, after knocking at the door, opened it, and disclosed to view Miss Hogg, facing the door, her lawyer by her side, and the little beauty, with her back turned to the door, playing with something in Miss Hogg's lap; Mathew, near the door, looked inquiringly at Lady Montgomery as she entered, and so did Walgrave, for now their doubts were to be removed.

Her ladyship's face cleared up, and a joyful smile shone on it as she stood in the doorway, and, lifting her joined hands, said, "Thank God. It is our Florence!"

"Yes, mother, there is no doubt of that," said her son, who stood behind her.

"I thought so;" said Walgrave, rubbing his hands joyfully; "I said so all along."

But Mathew, who had been watching Miss Hogg's face, saw that there was a look of mischief in her bright black eye, and a mocking expression on her lips, that made him uneasy. The lawyer looked somber. Had Miss Hogg dared to impose upon him, and bring him into such a false position and such dishonest dealings? But not a word was spoken.

All eyes were on Miss Hogg, who rose, as Lady Montgomery approached Isabelle, and, straightening herself up to her full height, she took Isabelle by the hand and turned her round facing Lady Montgomery and son; she said in a loud voice, "You must have wheels in your head, Lady Montgomery, if you can say that this child is your niece."

Lady Montgomery turned as white as death, for she saw at once, and beyond a doubt, that it was not the child she had believed, by her hair, to be her niece a moment ago—though the hair had been cut, it was the same beautiful color; her size, her elegant appearance, everything, had led her to believe that it was Lady Florence; but when she saw the face, though it was very beautiful and refined, she could never have mistaken it for her niece's. It was a terrible blow to her, for she had been so positive a moment ago; and now her sorrow was the greater for the joy she had experienced at the thought of having found her. The captain was also very pale, and much surprised at the great mistake that they had both made; and as for Walgrave, he gnashed his teeth with rage at having been made such a fool of by Miss Hogg; and yet, how could he say that she had led him astray when she had told him all along that he was making a mistake? He had been deceived by circumstances; he could prove nothing against Miss Hogg, and he knew it.

Poor Mathew also looked very blank. Where was the reward that he had made so sure of, and no promotion? Instead of this he and Walgrave would both be censured for the mistake they had made. He felt and knew by Miss Hogg's looks that she was the cause of the failure, and yet he could not have explained it, nor would he have dared accuse her of it.

The lawyer saw his way clear to make a good round sum out of this business.

Miss Hogg continued: "Do you still claim her, or have you discovered your mistake? I guess you have, and now I hope you will relieve me of your presence, and order your clever detectives to hunt elsewhere and leave me to go and come as I please, and not have them at every street corner following me and my maid, and insulting me and my mother, who was too ill to come here, through the worry she has experienced concerning your niece. What could I do with your niece? Tell me that. Our Isabelle is ten times more beautiful, are you not, my dear?" addressing the child, who remained quiet, but attentive to all that was said.

And though Isabelle did not understand anything about Lady Florence, she understood that this lady and gentleman had come to claim her, and that Miss Hogg was fighting her battle. She loved Mamie for it; still, she pitied the lady who looked so unhappy, and she said, "Mamie, I would never leave you and mamma, but still don't be so cross to this lady; she looks so unhappy, and I 'm sorry if she has lost her little girl; but I 'm not her, I 'm Isabelle de Courtney."

The lawyer looked at her with a smile and said, "You 're a perfect little lady, my dear, and lovely enough to be a princess."

Lady Montgomery had been unable to utter a word, the shock had been so great and unexpected. At last she managed to say, "I am really very sorry, Miss Hogg, that such a mistake should have occurred, and that you should have been annoyed. I apologize to you most sincerely, and hold you guiltless concerning the disappearance of our dear child. This little lady is not our Florence."

"Aha, my lady, so you are not riding such a high horse as when you insulted me at your country house, eh? I said that I would be revenged, and this is my time. Here is my lawyer, Mr. Bridgewell; if you will name ycurs he will arrange matters with him to my satisfaction."

"O, I see;" said her ladyship, throwing back her proud head; "it is a matter of money with you. I feared to insult you or I would have mentioned it myself, and

asked you to name a sum that would compensate you for the annoyances this unfortunate affair has occasioned you. I see that I was mistaken." And turning to the lawyer, she said, "My lawyers are Messrs. Storm & Morgan, No. 12 Clements Lane, London." And addressing her son, she said, "My son, we have no more business here;" and she walked out of the room with the air of a queen. And though Miss Hogg had been victorious, and her plan had succeeded so far, yet she felt very small.

As Lady Montgomery left the room Miss Hogg felt humbled, and certainly not the equal of Lady Montgomery, though she had had the upper hand of her. She felt no inclination to laugh, and she murmured, "O, if I had only been a lady I would not feel as I do! I suppose that I should not have asked for money; I know she thought it mean; she looked shocked, but I don't care! I 'll get just as much out of her as I possibly can, and it will be for Isabelle. My father always says never miss a chance of making money by hook or by crook, and I think he 's right. Now poor ma would never have thought of asking for anything; but she 's so simple!"

Her lawyer aroused her from her reveries by saying that it was best to strike while the iron is hot, and that he was going to call on Storm & Morgan and demand four thousand pounds in her name, with her permission.

"Yes, you had better go; do you think that I 'm right in claiming damages?"

"Most assuredly, my dear madam; it would not be wise to lose such a chance; you have suffered at their hands and they won't miss it; so leave everything in my hands and you will be satisfied;" and he departed.

Walgrave and Mathew had disappeared as soon as Lady Montgomery and her son had departed, and were now discussing what was to be done next. The only clew they had was the clothes found at Jerry's cottage; if they could only find him they might soon be on the right track; but he seemed to have disappeared entirely from the time he left Burr street.

"Miss Hogg seems to have cleared herself of all blame in this affair," said Walgrave.

"Yes," replied Mathew, "to all appearances; and I may be a fool to feel as I do, but I have the impression

that she has taken us in and is laughing at us; I can't drive that thought away."

"Nor I," said Walgrave; "and yet that child cannot be Lady Florence, for Lady Montgomery would have known her, and the child herself would have known her aunt and cousin, and she loves Miss Hogg, there's no gainsaying that; all I can say is that I am puzzled and never felt so bad in my life before; and Lady Montgomery will have to come down with a good sum of money through our blunder; and yet I don't see how we could have acted otherwise."

"Well," said Mathew, "there's no use crying over spilt milk; let us look forward, not backward."

"Quite right, Mathew; I'm going to try to find that Jerry. What do you propose doing?"

"I'll stick to Miss Hogg and find out her next move. I seem to be drawn to her and can't make up my mind to go on another tack."

"Is Jack on the lookout?"

"Well, no; as he was sure that I would catch Jerry; but I'll set him on his track again; he's a clever fellow, and may help us. I hope he will."

By this time they had arrived at the railway station, and Mathew saw Walgrave leave for London. He himself remained at Richmond to look after Miss Hogg, who soon left for London, taking Isabelle and her maid with her. Mrs. Hogg was very glad to have them back with her again.

Miss Hogg, leaving Isabelle with her mother, went out to look for furnished rooms, as she had promised her mother to do, and she soon found what she wanted not very far from Lady Florence. They moved that same night, to the great delight of Mrs. Hogg, who had never felt at home in a hotel.

The next day Miss Hogg sent for a carriage and took Lady Florence for a ride in the park, Katy going with them, and Jerry acting as coachman. Surely Miss Hogg was fond of danger; her success had made her bold. Lady Florence was dressed exactly like Isabelle, with a very slight difference; at least Mathew thought so; for he had not lost sight of Miss Hogg, and he said to himself, "I don't know if I am going mad, but I could swear that

this is not the same little girl we saw yesterday; she does n't look so lovingly at Miss Hogg. I must find out." He had seen them just driving away in the carriage and had followed them to the park and stood inside the ropes. He had seen the carriage pass and repass several times, and he felt more sure every time.

Jerry noticed and recognized Mathew in the gentleman with black beard and mustache who looked so hard at the carriage every time they passed him, and when at a safe distance he told Miss Hogg of her danger.

"What, at it again?" she said; "but wait; I 'll play him such a trick that he won't know where he stands. Go back home, stop at the door just time enough to put this young lady down; then drive your carriage three doors above, and wait there openly."

Jerry obeyed. They passed Mathew on the road. Katy and the child jumped down, and Jerry moved on three doors above, where Miss Hogg lived with her mother and Isabelle. She alighted; just then Katy joined her at the door, and they both went in. Jerry waited, not knowing what to do next. He saw Mathew approaching and he pretended to be adjusting the harness. Mathew approached, saying, "Well, my man, you have fine horses there."

"Yes, sir," Jerry replied politely, facing his enemy, who looked at him, but did not recognize him, as his mind was intent on the child he had just seen, and certainly he had never expected to find Jerry as Miss Hogg's coachman.

"To whom does this equipage belong?"

"Please, sir, my name 's John, and the carriage belongs to Miss Hogg, leastways I think so; but here she be; you can ask her;" and Miss Hogg appeared, holding Isabelle by the hand, her mother following, and Katy behind.

Mathew drew back; he had not expected Miss Hogg to come out again; he heard her say, "Dear ma, it would be a shame to leave you home on such a fine day, and I know that Isabelle won't mind having another ride, will you, dear?"

"O, I do love riding so much, Mamie, and to see all the fine ladies as we did."

"Yes," interrupted Miss Hogg, "but you like it better when ma is with us, don't you?"

"O, yes." And before she could say more they were off to the park again.

Isabelle had never been out riding without Mrs. Hogg, and she was about to say so when Miss Hogg ordered her coachman to drive to the park.

Mathew followed again; not knowing that he had been recognized, he did n't hide; he was certainly more than puzzled; he feared that he was suffering from an hallucination, and now that he had seen the child closer he had to own to himself that it was the one they had seen yesterday; but the one he had seen that morning had seemed different —in what way he could not have explained—the dress was the same, beyond a doubt, and the golden hair under the broad brimmed hat. Where was the difference? He felt as if he were going mad; yes, it must be himself that was wrong; his head must be giving way under so much strain and disappointment as he had undergone lately, besides the blows he had received from Walgrave. He kept on watching, his mind getting more and more uneasy every time he looked at Isabelle, who seemed as happy as a queen, often speaking to Mrs. Hogg, and smiling lovingly at her. Mathew compared her behavior while riding with Miss Hogg that morning with that of this second ride; she seemed to enjoy the second one much more. Was it owing to Mrs. Hogg's presence? It might be. They seemed much attached to each other. Miss Hogg now and then looked at her lovingly, but she had done the same during the first ride. It must be Mrs. Hogg's presence which brought the light and joy to Isabelle's face. But what had made him doubt the identity of the child at the first glance he had given her? He owned that he must be wrong, and yet there was a weight of uneasiness on his mind that he could not shake off, argue as he might.

It was well for Miss Hogg that Mathew had not been able to approach the carriage near enough to look into Lady Florence's face, for the game would have been up. He was a shrewd fellow, and if she did not make a move he would catch her yet, clever as she was, and she knew it. "If it was Walgrave I could bamboozle or bully him into

getting into a passion, and so get the best of him; but this fellow is as cool as a fish in a pond and he 'll do me mischief. I think it 's about time we left England. I 'll play him one trick more and then I 'm off. I must also get rid of ma; I 'll send her back to America with Isabelle."

She had noticed the uneasy look on Mathew's face, though she had taken good care not to let him see that she recognized him. After an hour's ride they returned home, still followed by Mathew up to the house; he was just turning the corner as they got down and were entering the house. "Well," he thought, "I must be mad, that 's all; for I saw them come out of the house and I have seen them return to it; everything seems square, but the same doubts fill my mind."

Had Mathew been near enough to see Lady Florence enter the carriage he would have noticed that she had come out three doors below the one that Isabelle had passed through; but he had arrived just in time to see the carriage drive away and he could not have said from which door, and very naturally he thought it must be from the same house. He had seen Mrs. Hogg and party go for the second ride, and he was certain that they had returned to the same. "I must be out of my senses, that 's all. I 'll go and take a rest; that will clear my head; then I shall see that coachman and get what I can out of him; he seems intelligent, but I must go slowly, for Lady Montgomery won't relish paying another few thousands for my blunder, should it be one. These Americans are the very devil for cunning and deceit; but did she really do it, as Lady Montgomery and her son seem to be sure she did? For my part, when I consider these things without prejudice I don't see a shadow of proof against her. That she is making fun of us, leading us a chase, and enjoying it too, is beyond a doubt; and that she is making a good profit out of it is also sure. But then again, what has become of Lady Florence? That 's the push! Did she or did she not do it? There, I 'm at it again. Botheration! My head feels like a spinning wheel; I 'll surely go mad! I 'm generally pretty cool, but I must say that in this case I don't feel the same man. Come, Mathew, cool down, or you 'll make a mess of it! If Walgrave was in my

place, feeling as I do, he 'd break a blood vessel. I wonder if he 's on Jerry's track yet! He 'll beat me yet, I 'm afraid!"

Poor Mathew! Had he guessed that he was so near Jerry and had spoken to him he would have felt worse yet, and called himself a fool not to be looking for Jerry while looking for Lady Florence. We will leave him to go and take a rest and clear his brain for his next meeting with Miss Hogg, and, like a true British subject, wish him all success in bringing this American heiress to a well deserved punishment.

CHAPTER XXX.

Miss Hogg, although she had outwitted Mathew this time, was beginning to fear him, and for a few days she did not take Lady Florence out. She felt that she was being cornered. She had received her four thousand pounds from Lady Montgomery, and the lawyer had pocketed five hundred pounds. She had no desire to be found out and be compelled not only to pay back the money but be severely punished; still she must outwit the detectives once more. She did not remember the proverb that says "let well alone." "The last time" seems to me to go always contrary to our wishes and to bring us into trouble or sorrow, as the case may be; and unless Miss Hogg's luck follows her, as it certainly has done so far, she will not be an exception to the rule; she will learn to her cost that she may take her pitcher to the spring once too often.

She had taken the Jerrys into her confidence; she could not very well have done otherwise, for she needed help, and as they were entirely dependent upon her, not daring to return to their cottage, she had them in her power, and as Lady Florence was in their charge, should she be discovered they were sure of a terrible punishment—imprisonment for years. They, knowing the danger into which Miss Hogg had led them, and seeing no way of escape, had made up their minds to do their best to conceal the child, though had they known at the beginning that Miss Hogg had taken her it is doubtful if they would have consented to have had a hand in it, though they were well paid. Having forgotten the child's clothes in the cottage had been the finishing touch; they would seem to be the guilty ones if they were caught, for the proof was strong. They would be supposed to have done it for revenge, Jerry having been run down as a poacher by Lord Montgomery's gamekeeper, Harrison. No matter what accusation they brought against Miss Hogg they could prove nothing; their word would not be taken. The mother and son had often discussed the matter, and had

agreed that there was no going back on what had been done, that Miss Hogg's clever management had put it out of their power; so they sank deeper and deeper into it, obeyed, and joined their wits to hers to outwit the detectives.

The young Lady Florence was not unhappy; she had fretted the first few days, but when told that she was in danger of being stolen by gypsies, saw how kindly she was treated by every one, and that Miss Hogg bought her all kinds of toys and promised to take her back to her aunt as soon as the bad people had gone away, she became apparently happy. Katy often visited her and amused her, as well as Mrs. Jerry; and, after all, she was only an eight year old child, and had only been with her aunt a few months, and though she loved her and her cousin, she missed the French customs of her former home. Miss Hogg promised to take her to France while they were waiting for the gypsies to go away, and she seemed rejoiced over it. She had been very much pleased to go to the park in Miss Hogg's carriage, and she told her that she had been there with her aunt while they were in London; but she had felt rather surprised when Katy had rushed into the house with her, saying, "Run upstairs, dear Isabelle, I saw the gypsies around the corner," and had left her on the first step to find her way alone to Mrs. Jerry, and had rushed out, slamming the door after her. She had gone up and told her nurse Mary, as she called Mrs. Jerry, and the old woman had guessed that danger was at hand; had locked the door, peeped out at the window, and seen her son waiting with the carriage a few doors above; she had also seen the detective talking to him—she did not recognize him, but she guessed who he was; then Miss Hogg, coming out with the real Isabelle, followed by Mrs. Hogg and Katy. Mrs. Jerry saw at once that Miss Hogg had had a narrow escape, and was trying to deceive the detective by going out with Isabelle, having returned under the pretext of fetching Mrs. Hogg. Would it succeed? She hoped so. "What nerve that Miss Hogg has! Many women would faint under the circumstances," she thought, but Miss Hogg was of the fainting kind.

Still, she was beginning to fear Mathew; she could not

throw him off the scent; she certainly puzzled him, but did not convince him, and sooner or later he would find out the trick, for he continued dogging her steps under one disguise or another. Sometimes she did not recognize him until her return home; it would come on her like a flash; yes, it must have been he in the disguise of a dandy, with a glass stuck in his right eye. They had met him three times. Mathew was decidedly handsome now that his well shaped nose had taken on its proper size and the bruises had entirely disappeared. Why, she had had a mind to smile at him as he looked into their carriage with what she had supposed to be admiration.

"O, what a fool I am, after all, and how he must laugh at me for my vanity! You bet he'll overreach me yet! I no longer dare to take Lady Florence out, and Jerry says that a boy the size of the shoeblack who betrayed him once, is often seen about our place, Mathew is always pumping him, and that it's a wonder that he has n't recognized him, and he fears that he will with the help of the boy. O, this can't last; I must make a move; we will go to America; surely he will not follow us there."

She discussed the matter with her mother, who owned that she would really be pleased to go back to her husband, as she was tired of knocking about, and that if Mamie had had enough of Europe she would be ready to start in less than a week; and so it was arranged.

Miss Hogg, her mother, and Isabelle often went out shopping, buying all sorts of things to take back with them. Mathew was kept busy, and he was on the watch more than ever, for he thought, "This looks to me as if they were preparing to make a move, but she won't give me the slip this time; I'll find out where she's going; the coachman said to America, and I believe he spoke the truth. I asked him if he was going too, and he said, 'I wish I were, but Miss Hogg don't seem inclined to take me. You don't want a coachman, do you, sir, or perhaps some of your friends may; please say a word for me.' He's a fine fellow, but of course I don't want him. If he only knew who I am he would n't be in such a hurry to tell me about his mistress; but I only said, 'I'm not

settled enough yet to get a coachman, but I 'll mention you to my friends.' "

Poor Mathew! He was being taken in by Jerry, who, in telling him that Miss Hogg was going to America, was only obeying orders; and he would have felt greatly embarrassed if Mathew had taken him at his word and engaged him as his coachman; but clever Jerry knew very well that there was no danger; a detective does n't require a coachman.

Jerry's mother had also received orders to tell the landlady that the American family to whom the young lady belonged were to return to America in a week.

Trunks were packed, and a good many of them, for Miss Hogg had purchased a good supply for Lady Florence and her nurse. At last, the day of departure arrived; Mathew had been apprised of it by Jerry, and had set Jack to help him to watch, for how if Miss Hogg should go without leaving a clew behind? They would be in the dark, for Walgrave had failed to find any trace of Jerry or his mother, and Miss Hogg was so deep, and quite able to smuggle Lady Florence on board the train for Liverpool, or have her sent under the care of some one else to join her on the ship before it left port, for he had no inclination to go running after Miss Hogg to America. So he and the boy watched the house all that day from early morn, though Mathew had been told by Jerry that they meant to leave at four o'clock in the afternoon; still, not entirely trusting Jerry, they had watched all day; but Jerry must be a truthful man, for at half past three a wagon came for the trunks, and at four Jerry was seen coming round the corner with the carriage. Mrs. Hogg came out of the house first, accompanied by Isabelle, who was well muffled up for fear of the night air; only the tip of her pretty nose could be seen, and even that only through a thick veil. Miss Hogg wore a thick veil, but there was no mistaking her tall and strong figure. Katy, the maid, came last, her hands full of bundles. The coachman helped them all in, and, mounting his box, moved away as fast as he could, and made for the Great Eastern Station.

Mathew and the boy, having each had a cab in readiness, followed, and arrived at the station almost as soon

as Jerry; but everything seemed square. Mathew heard Jerry say, "O, Miss Hogg, I do wish I was going with you; I 'm left without a place."

"Well, John, it can't be helped," was the reply; "I never promised to take you, and you 'll be sure to find another place soon; here 's a present for you;" and she gave him a purse that seemed well filled.

"Thank you, ma'am," he said; "can I do anything more for you?"

"No, John."

"Well, good-by, ma'am, and a happy journey to you, your mother, and the young lady."

"Good-by, John; now I must go; I hear the train." And she disappeared in the station with Mathew after her.

As for Jerry, he had pretended not to see Mathew, but seemed very much affected, and wiped his eyes on the sleeve of his coat; he then mounted his box again and drove away with a smile on his face.

When Miss Hogg entered the waiting room she called her maid aside, and after saying a few words to her they both laughed merrily. Mathew, who stood near the glass door, saw them, and said to himself, "They are probably laughing at me, thinking that they have given me the slip, but I 'll get aboard the train and follow them to Liverpool, and I must manage to see that child's face; why she 's so wrapped up I don't know, for the weather 's not cold; my doubts about that child are growing strong again. You may think yourself safe, Miss Hogg, but 'he laughs well who laughs last.' You might have waited until you were out of the woods before rejoicing at your escape; you have no idea that I 'm so close to you or perhaps you would n't laugh."

But Mathew was mistaken. The scene enacted by Miss Hogg and her maid had been for his benefit, for Jerry had told her under what disguise to look for him, and she had seen him pass the glass door, not appearing to recognize him.

The train entered the station and people rushed to their seats, while the porters carried the luggage to the car. Mathew watched on the platform, never losing sight of Miss Hogg for a moment, and when she entered a first

class carriage he got into the one next her and kept his head out of the window until the train started. He looked for Jack on the platform but saw nothing of him; in fact, he had not seen him since their arrival at the station; perhaps he was in another carriage; but he did n't trouble about him for he knew that he was quite able to take care of himself.

The train went on and Mathew watched at every station to see that Miss Hogg did n't escape him, but she showed no sign of wanting to do so. When they had passed several stations the train stopped for five minutes for refreshments. Neither Miss Hogg nor her mother got out, but Katy brought them some tea and cakes, went back with the tray, and was gone so long that Mathew grew suspicious, got down, passed Miss Hogg's carriage to see if the child was still there, and found to his great satisfaction that she was. Miss Hogg was saying "Katy will be left if she does n't hurry back." Sure enough! the guards called "All aboard!" people came running in, but no Katy. Miss Hogg had had her head out of the window apparently looking for her maid, but she was not to be seen. The whistle blew and the train began to move. Katy was seen running toward the carriage, but too late; trains never stop for laggards. Miss Hogg shouted to her to come by the next train, threw her purse on the platform, and the maid was left behind, the very picture of despair; but no sooner had the train disappeared than her face changed as if by magic. Returning to the waiting room, after picking up the purse, and laughing to herself, she said, "Well, that was a good one! I wish Mamie could have done the same, but she could not for he would have got off at the next station and come back, or perhaps jumped out of the carriage here, and then where would we have been! But never mind; she 'll give him the slip yet, clever as he is! He 's a nice looking fellow, too, now that his face is n't bruised. How different to the American chaps! Well, I should smile! Don't I wish I could get a fellow like that to marry me? You bet I do. Why, I 'd lace his shoes; but he 's too proud; he would n't look at me; a detective thinks something of himself here, and I must say that this one 's clever, and if Mamie was not the very devil he would have caught her

before now. He seems to know that she has done it, though he has no clew to go by; he keeps after her like a blood-hound. But it 's near time for my train."

She went to the ticket office and got a ticket for London, not for Liverpool.

Miss Hogg arrived safely in Liverpool with her mother and Isabelle, and went to the Royal Hotel, where Mathew followed them. He had not as yet been able to see the child's face and he resolved not to leave until he had done so. He engaged a room and retired, having learned that Miss Hogg intended to remain there over night.

CHAPTER XXXI.

MEANWHILE, Miss Hogg, after ordering supper served in a private room, went upstairs to her mother and said, "Now I think you can manage without me. There are a lot of our American friends in the hotel who are going by the same steamer."

"Yes, but still I think, Mamie, that you ought to come back with us. What will your father say, after you have been away for so many months?"

"O, don't bother; he won't say nothing; he's only too glad to have me enjoy myself. I really intended to go back with you, but when Jennie M'Kane told me that they were going to Paris, and her father, mother, and herself begged me so hard to go with her I could n't say no; and now that you have Isabelle you won't miss me, and I 'll come back with them in about two months. Give pa all the presents I bought for him; see that the pipe don't get broken, and give him my love. I 'm sorry that Katy missed the train, but she 's to be here to-morrow morning, and if she is n't you can take another girl; there are plenty who will be glad to go to America for their passage money. But perhaps Katy will be here in time, as the steamer does n't leave until afternoon. Now good-by, dear ma, God bless you!" and she kissed her mother affectionately.

"Good-by, my dear Mamie, and mind you take good care of yourself and don't stay more than two months."

"No, ma; I promise you; and I will write every week."

"Good-by, sister Isabelle; I 'll bring you a Paris doll when I return;" she said, kissing the child.

Isabelle kissed her affectionately, and said, "I wish you were coming with mamma and me."

"So do I at this moment, for I don't like to leave you, but it is too late now. What 's two months, after all? So cheer up."

The servant appeared and announced that supper was served in the next room, and disappeared. Miss Hogg saw her mother and Isabelle comfortably seated at the

table, and, kissing them once more, she left the room and the hotel without having been seen by anyone, and Mathew least of all; for after learning that Miss Hogg had ordered supper upstairs he felt sure that she intended to remain at the hotel that night at least, so he had gone to bed and had slept soundly until five o'clock, when he awoke and kept watch on every one leaving the hotel.

At ten o'clock, having seen nothing of Miss Hogg he ventured to ask if the American ladies had left. "No," replied the chambermaid, "I suppose they were tired, for they have just rung for breakfast."

The steamer was to leave at four in the afternoon, and probably Mrs. Hogg and family meant to rest until that time, not caring to go about Liverpool, so he waited and watched. He often thought of Jack. What had become of him? He would have been very useful just then, for it would be hard work for Mathew to watch and prevent Miss Hogg from escaping with the child in such a crowd as there would surely be at the steamer. Then he thought of Katy. Had she come by the last train the night before? He must find out; so, when, about one o'clock, he went in to his dinner, he managed to ask if Miss Hogg's servant had come yet, as she had missed her train and had been left behind.

"O, yes," answered the maid, "she is with her now."

"O, all right," thought Mathew; "it was an accident, after all; she had not intended being left."

He waited patiently for the time of their departure, and thought it was strange that he had not seen Katy enter the hotel; she must have come in the night; perhaps the maid did n't know, had only just seen her and thought she had just arrived; and thus his mind worked from one thing to another until he saw Mrs. Hogg go to meet the American friends who were also going back.

Mathew was in a perfect fever of excitement. Where were Miss Hogg and the child? He looked everywhere, but no Miss Hogg, no child; he was on the point of asking Mrs. Hogg herself, who was talking with an old friend whom she had not expected to meet there; but Mathew was saved the trouble of interrupting them, for he saw Miss Hogg and Isabelle coming down the stairs, well

wrapped and veiled; but though he waited until everybody was going no Katy appeared.

"O, never mind the maid," he thought, "I have the mistress, which is better."

He followed them to the steamer in a cab, never losing sight of Miss Hogg's carriage. When on board, he passed Miss Hogg and stared her in the face, but the sight that met his eyes nearly floored him. The lady was not Miss Hogg, but a tall blonde, and decidedly English; she was saying to Isabelle, "Come away from the crowd, my dear; let us sit down on this bench where we can see everybody and not be in the way. Do you think you will like me, Miss Isabelle? When we get to your home I will lend you a lot of pretty books, and you will try to learn, won't you, my dear?"

"Yes, Miss Davenport, I will try; and I shall have to learn to play the piano; you play so well."

"O," thought Mathew, "this lady must be a governess they have engaged for the child, and the little girl is really the one that we saw at Richmond; but where are Miss Hogg and her maid who lost her train yesterday?" He turned pale as the thought struck him that he had failed again. O, if so, it was too humiliating! Was it possible that they had again escaped him! And why, if she was innocent? No, she must be guilty, and the child he had seen going for the first ride in the park was not this one. It must have been Lady Florence; now he felt sure of it; and Miss Hogg had stayed behind to hide her while she had made him run after her to Liverpool and had left him there. Poor Mathew was so exasperated at himself that he could have torn his hair; he, usually so cool; what was he to do—go back to London and look for Miss Hogg? But he had no clew; he did n't even know if she had gone to London. He resolved to make sure that Mrs. Hogg and the child had left for America before searching for Miss Hogg; he walked over to where Mrs. Hogg was with her friend, and listened, while apparently gazing overboard, and heard the friend ask why Miss Hogg had remained in England.

"She meant to return with me," replied Mrs. Hogg, "but the day before we left London some American friends asked her to go with them to France, and as they speak French, she thought she would enjoy herself more with

them than she had with me, for we often made terrible blunders as neither of us could speak French, or even understand it. Then Mamie is very hot-tempered, as you know; she would fly into a passion and abuse anyone who smiled, and I was glad when we came back to London; and I am gladder still to go back to New York, for there 's no place like your own home, after all; and my husband must be lonely, and will be glad to see me back again. What he 'll say about Mamie not coming with me I don't know, for he loves his girl, and I believe that she loves her father better than she does me, though she loves me too; she is so high-spirited and headstrong that I am obliged to let her have her way."

Mathew listened to all this and much more, and he felt that Miss Hogg had deceived her mother and had remained in England for a far different reason than to go to Paris with the M'Kanes. Still, to anyone not interested in the matter it all seemed very plausible, and he felt that it would be hard for him to prove the contrary, unless he found traces of her in the company of a fair little girl. That remained to be seen, but for the present he did not know where to look for her. London was a large place and she certainly had not gone back to the same quarters, or what would have been the use of giving him the slip? The maid had remained behind, not by accident, but by a prearranged plan, and probably had returned to London and had gone away with Lady Florence, where Miss Hogg had now gone to rejoin them. O, if he had not let her escape!

She must have gone in the night. His brain was beginning to get puzzled again when a voice called out, "All ashore who are not going," and all passengers' friends hurriedly said good-by and left. Mathew was the last to go, and he remained on the pier until the ship steamed away.

"Now," said he to himself, "I am free to hunt for Miss Hogg. I don't think she's in Liverpool, so I'll go back to London, try to find Jack and ascertain why he didn't come with me. I must also consult with Walgrave. I can't work this case alone, and two heads will be better than one, even if we have to share the reward, from which we are as far off as ever, I, at least; for perhaps Jack found a

clew and went back to him, and between them they have found Lady Florence, while I have gone on a wild goose chase."

All these thoughts had worked him up into a fever, and he wiped the perspiration from his forehead with his silk handkerchief. He had no appetite for his supper, so he waited in the station and bought his ticket for London, which he reached late that night. He would like to know where Walgrave was, if possible.

Walgrave was just then at the office inquiring for Mathew.

"Well, it seems that you want to see each other," said the captain to him; "here is Mathew, who seems in a hurry to see you; perhaps he has found Lady Florence. This note is from him. Will you go and see him to-night?"

"Yes, captain, I 'll go at once;" and he hurried away, thinking to himself that Mathew had found her, "or why, except to prove that he is more clever than I, should he wish to see me, for I must admit that he has been ahead of me all through this case. I 'm sorry to lose the reward, but I would give it up willingly for the honor of having been foremost in this case. I feel humbled. At my age, and with my experience, to have failed, when Mathew, a young man, less than eight years on the force, has succeeded. I hardly dare meet him!"

Walgrave looked sad and careworn as he entered Mathew's room and said, "You have found her, Mathew?"

"No, have you?" was the answer that electrified him, and gave him renewed hope and energy.

Mathew offered Walgrave a chair, which he took, full of eagerness to hear all that had occurred.

They both concluded that the first thing to do was to find Jack. "He must have found a clew," said Walgrave; "he 's a clever fellow, and may beat us yet."

"Where do you propose to look for him? I 'll go back to the station and look for traces of him there, where I lost sight of him: and you, Mr. Walgrave, where can you begin?"

"At the house where Miss Hogg lodged with her mother and that mysterious little girl who has made us lose our reckoning so many times; and if I don't hear of Jack I may find out something worth knowing about Miss Hogg.

We must not despise small clews, for they may lead to great results."

"You 're right, Mr. Walgrave; I owe my success to small clews; I don't mean about this case, for I 've made a mess of the whole business."

"Well, we 've done our best, and no one can do more; but if we want to begin to-morrow morning we 'd better go to bed and rest. You look done up."

"And I can assure you that I feel queer," replied Walgrave, "for I can't take things coolly as you do. I have been in a fever ever since we began this case, and we are no more advanced to-day than we were the first day, but less, I may say; and there 's no finding that Jerry; I 've hunted him high and low—had Smith and Stevens to help me—and among us we have n't been able to find the shadow of a clew. Well, I 'm off; I won't keep you up any longer, it 's after twelve;" and he left Mathew in a better frame of mind than he was when he entered.

Mathew felt very much as Walgrave did. He resolved to use all his wit and energy to find some trace of Miss Hogg if Jack had not already done so. But why had Jack gone without leaving word anywhere? There was something mysterious in his silence; he longed for the morning to come!

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE two really clever detectives went their different ways, and Miss Hogg, after leaving the hotel, returned to the station on foot, as she had no intention of leaving a clew behind, fearing that Mathew would discover her escape early next morning; but, as we have seen, Mrs. Hogg, very innocently, covered her daughter's retreat by remaining in her room till a late hour.

Having sent a messenger to a servants' bureau for a well recommended nursery governess willing to leave at once for New York, in less than two hours, a tall, ladylike person had applied for the situation, secured it, and had remained with Mrs. Hogg, sending the messenger with a note to have her trunk sent aboard the steamer by three o'clock, and so it was that Mathew had been deceived; he thought the woman was Katy, the maid who had informed him having believed that the governess was the person he had referred to.

Miss Hogg, having taken tickets, not for London but for Dover, traveled part of the night, and arrived at the hotel she had agreed on with Katy, expecting to find her there. She inquired, and was informed that no maid had come or asked for Miss Hogg.

"Well, show me to a bedroom, and as soon as she arrives send her to me."

"Yes, ma'am," answered the chambermaid, "I 'll tell the clerk."

Miss Hogg thought: "There 's a hitch somewhere; Katy has had plenty of time to go back to London, arrange matters there, and be in time to meet me here. Walgrave is at the bottom of it. How have they managed to make a mess of it? My plan was so well arranged, and to think that among the three of them they could n't find a way of escape. They have no brains; they send me no word of what has happened, leaving me here in the dark If I stay here Walgrave may come at any moment and arrest me, and if I leave here where are they to find me? I can't

send word for I don't know where they are, and my telegram might fall into the hands of the detectives; so I see nothing for it but to stay here and be caught. Katy is cute; she would have managed to warn me; why has n't she done so? Some accident must have happened to her, or she has been arrested with Jerry and his mother. O, this is dreadful; just when I thought myself sure of success! I managed Mathew so well, why could n't they manage Walgrave, who was n't half as cute?

"Well, it 's no use, I can't sleep. It would have been better if I had n't taken the child at all; I have often thought so, for what benefit is she to me? But I did n't see my way clear to send her back without a scandal. Really, I wish I were with my mother on board the steamer. What will pa and ma say when they hear what I have done? Well, Mamie Hogg, you 've put your foot in it this time, and you must be very tired or you would n't be such a coward, for rather than look back on what can't be undone you had better try to find a way of escape! Well, I 'll try to sleep. No one but Katy knows I 'm here, and she won't betray me; and to-morrow morning I 'll see the papers, and if they have been taken it will be in, and in large letters too."

Morning came, and Miss Hogg inquired of the clerk if her maid had come.

"No, ma'am," was his answer, "but some baggage came yesterday evening, and a telegram, which I suppose, of course, the chambermaid gave you; it came before you did."

"I have received no telegram. How very careless of the maid! My servant is probably ill, and has telegraphed me to apprise me of the fact. Where is the telegram?" asked Miss Hogg, excitedly, with a flushed face, to think that a telegram should have come and she had not received it. Something dreadful must have happened, and if she had received it last night things might have been set right, who knows?

The clerk had really forgotten to give it to the maid, and, pretending to go in search of her, he soon came back with it, looking almost as uneasy as Miss Hogg herself, for he feared that the telegram being important, an investigation might take place, and he would surely be

dismissed for accusing the maid of not having delivered the telegram which she had not received from him.

Miss Hogg made a grab for it and was going back to her room to read it, guessing that the clerk would read her thoughts, for if something shocking had happened she would not be able to control her feelings; her face would betray her—when the clerk ran after her with another telegram which had just arrived. As she turned round the messenger was just running out of the hotel. "O, it must be very serious," she thought, as she took it from the clerk, who seemed more and more frightened. Poor Miss Hogg felt for the first time her legs giving way under her, and she trembled in all her limbs; her hands shook so that she could hardly open the telegram. She had remained at the foot of the stairs; she felt that she would never be able to go up; looking over her shoulder to see if Walgrave was not already there to arrest her, she managed to open the last telegram, knowing that it must be of more consequence to her than the first. She read as follows:

"For God's sake hurry here; you will understand I am dying; your presence might save me; if I am dead John will meet you at the corner, and if you don't see him there hurry to the house. KATY."

Miss Hogg was a brave woman, as we know, and she felt that she must act, not give way to fears; she could see that there was still hope, or Katy would have simply told her to escape. She had recovered her nerve, and she asked the clerk at what time the train left for London. "In ten minutes, ma'am," he answered. "The station is just across the street."

Miss Hogg ran upstairs as supple as a deer; no more weakness now; she was all fire and ready for action; in a few minutes she was down again saying, "My servant is dying; if I had only received the telegram last night!" She walked across the street to the station just in time to get her ticket.

It was a fast train, and yet she had never been in one that seemed to go so slowly. Would it never get there? And what could have happened to prevent Katy's coming to her? Was she alone detained, and had Jerry, his mother, and the child escaped? No, no, no; Katy would

have hinted as much. They must all be in great danger. Most likely Jerry had sent his mother and Lady Florence away from the house and had stayed there himself waiting for her. No, that could n't be it, for her telegram said that Jerry would be at the corner should she be dead, which meant, of course, arrested. But Jerry must have expected her in the night, or very early this morning, and, not seeing her, must have tired of waiting, or even might have been recognized and arrested.

"O, Walgrave, you are more clever than I thought you! O, my heart, I would rather have been found out by Mathew! Chance must have put you on Katy's track, not your cleverness, for if I could outwit Mathew as I have done, I could easily outwit you, and Katy is no fool; so it must be your luck, that 's all. But all is not lost, according to Katy; if I could only get there in time she seems to think that my presence could alter matters. Well, at last, here we are;" as the train ran into the station, and calling a cab she was soon in the Strand, for Euston Station is not far from it. She stopped the cab at the corner, dismissed it, and looked about for Jerry, but no Jerry was there. Was it a good sign, or had he been arrested unknown to Katy? If so, Miss Hogg, by going to the house, would run into the trap set for her by Walgrave.

All these thoughts flashed through her head as she stood at the corner for a minute, and her clear and clever brain formed another plan. She said to herself, "If I am to be caught it will not be in such a clumsy trap; why, that would be running into it with my eyes wide open; if I have to lay down my arms I will at least make another effort to save myself and those who have served me, and I can best do it by remaining free, there 's no doubt about that. If it was very dark I could approach the house near enough to see if there 's anyone on the watch for me; but as it is bright daylight it can't be done; so here goes: where there 's a will there 's a way," and going into a doorway, she took out her tablet and wrote on one of the leaves: "Katy, darling, can I see you at the back door? I have enlisted for a soldier and I want to say good-by, mavourneen. I dare not come to the front door for fear of your mistress, who is a real she-devil and can't bear

the sight of me. Yours with lots of kisses, which I wish to give, not send. PATRICK RILEY."

"There, that 'll do," said Miss Hogg; "she 'll know my writing and manage to warn me if there 's danger. Now for a messenger;" and seeing a small boy going along with a milk jug, she called to him and said, "Here, my boy, take this note to No. 71 as you pass by, and I 'll give you this sixpence."

"Yes, mum, I will;" and taking the note and the sixpence he went off, and Miss Hogg saw him going up the steps of the house where Katy was supposed to be.

Then, going around the block, Miss Hogg found herself in a lane just at the back of the row of houses, one of which was 71, and hiding in one of the back doors behind some ash barrels, she watched to see who would come out of the back door; if it was Katy she would come out of her hiding place, but if Walgrave, or another man, she would stay where she was until he had gone in again, and then—well, she would find some other means to communicate with Katy. She heard the back door unbolted; she peeped between two barrels behind which she was crouching, and saw, not Katy but a man, who looked up and down the lane, and even stepped into the middle of it, and seemed very much disappointed. Miss Hogg almost fancied that it was Jerry, but not being sure, she dared not show herself, for Walgrave might have disguised himself to entrap her if he had suspected that the note came from her; so she would wait.

The man did not stay long, but went in again, and another figure appeared, and looked up and down the lane, as the man had done, but this time Miss Hogg came out of her hiding place, which was not a pleasant one; she had recognized her maid Katy, and, hurrying towards her, they both disappeared through the back door.

Miss Hogg's first question was, "Have you Lady Florence yet?"

"Yes; but let us get into the house, for if the landlady saw you coming in the back way she would think it strange and might suspect something wrong."

"Where is she?"

"At the front door, talking to Jerry. I noticed her there, and was talking to her when Jerry came to the back

door, but he soon came back making signs that he had not seen you, and meeting him half way in the hall, I put your note into his hand and said, 'Show it to the landlady,' and I could hear them laughing as I ran into the yard. But wait; you 'll have to hide here in the wash-house till I get her away from the hall, and we 'll go upstairs."

She locked Miss Hogg up in the wash-house, and putting her apron to her eyes, went upstairs sobbing.

"Poor girl," said Jerry, "she 's lost her sweetheart; I must tell the nurse to comfort her."

He left the landlady to go back to her basement, while he went upstairs and met Katy on the first turning. She said, "If the coast is clear take that key and open the wash-house quick—she 's there."

He obeyed, and Miss Hogg was soon listening to an account of what had happened during her absence. Katy made her start when she whispered to her, "We have one of the detectives here."

"What! And you have brought me here? You must be mad, Katy. Was that your reason for sending for me, to have me arrested with all the rest of you? Where is he?"

"In Jerry's bedroom."

Jerry entered at that moment and said, "Miss Hogg, this is no time for explanations; Katy will tell you later on. The fact is that I have a detective here in my room under lock and key, and I want to know what is to be done with him. If he was a rabbit I 'd twist his neck; but as it is, I can't very well do that; and if we let him loose he 'll be after us with a gang of detectives before we can say Jack Robinson."

"Do you think there are others near?" asked Miss Hogg, flushed with excitement at finding herself cornered, so to speak.

"No, Miss Hogg, I have been watching all night, and no suspicious person has approached the house."

"Well, listen to me; we have no time to waste. Have you sent your luggage to Hastings?"

"Yes, miss, and yours to Dover."

"I know, I know, I was told so at the hotel. Bring your mother here."

Jerry left the room and soon returned with his mother.

"Now, Mrs. Jerry," whispered Miss Hogg, "keep your wits about you, and everything will come out right. Wrap up the child so that her hair can't be seen, and take the next train for Hastings, where you will find your luggage at the Antwerp steamer office. There is a boat leaving for Antwerp to-night; take a second class cabin, and when you reach Antwerp go to the Ursuline Convent. I will give you a note and money for the mother superioress. They keep a school; you will leave her there, and explain to her that it is to save her from the gypsies, and that I will soon come myself and take her away. She is not to tell her real name; mind that you impress that strongly upon her mind."

"I understand, Miss Hogg."

"Nor must she mention my name. Invent whatever name you wish for her parents—or wait—it might be best for me to do it in my note. I am so excited that I hardly know what I am doing. Suppose we call her Isabelle Reynolds—that will do—and you, her nurse, Mrs. Martin. Now go and get the child ready while I write."

Katy had brought writing materials to her mistress, who soon had the note ready for Mrs. Martin, as we shall now call her.

She soon appeared with Lady Florence wrapped up so that no one would have recognized the elegant little lady who was seen in the park. Miss Hogg spoke very kindly to her and kissed her fondly, for, strange as it may seem, she was beginning to feel attached to her. Giving Mrs. Martin money, she told her to go on foot for a block or so, and then take a cab for the station for Hastings.

"But where am I to go when the young lady is at school?"

"O, I had forgotten. Take a room somewhere in the town. Don't mention that you have put a child to school, but leave your address at the convent, where I shall write as soon as I possibly can. Now go, and for goodness sake, don't waste time. Your son will rejoin you later on. Is the coast clear, Jerry?" she asked as he made his appearance.

"Yes, miss, I have been on the lookout."

"Then go down and see that the landlady does n't see your mother leave the house."

He went, and was soon heard talking to her in the back yard. Katy carried the child downstairs and saw her and Mrs. Jerry safely out of the house, and then returned to her mistress to learn what was to be done with the detective. She was in constant fear of hearing heavy footsteps coming up the stairs and proving to be those of more detectives in search of the one who had disappeared.

Jerry came for orders concerning the poor fellow whom he had bound and locked in his room, and but for whom they would all have been far away by this time. Jerry was beginning to have visions of a prison cell, and had been sorry more than once that he had undertaken to serve Miss Hogg in her revenge; but he saw no way out, though he felt he was sinking deeper and deeper into danger. He realized what would be his punishment for having taken part in the abduction of Lady Florence, and it gave him energy to go on. But what was he to do with a real live detective? He was at a loss to say; so he made Katy send for her mistress to advise them, and now he awaited her orders.

She said, "We have no time to lose. Has this fellow seen Katy?"

"No, ma'am."

"Very good; it isn't as bad as it might be. You have n't hurt him, have you?"

"No, miss; he 's only a boy of about sixteen; I could manage him myself with one hand; but he 's clever, and if we let him go we 're lost. It was him who betrayed me before, so he must not be allowed to leave the house; not yet, at least."

"We shall have to give him a sleeping draught, for you may depend upon it that as soon as he has guessed that you have left the house he 'll make himself heard."

"True, miss; though we must be careful not to give him an overdose, and kill him; that would never do."

"O, no fear of that; we 'll give him what we gave Lady Florence; he 'll sleep at least twelve hours and then he 'll awake quite stupefied and won't know where he is for some hours; so take this bottle and saturate a hand-

kerchief well with the liquid and hold it to his nose till he goes off to sleep; then untie him and lock the door for fear that some one might go in, and, thinking him dead, would make a fuss before we are safe. Now hurry and let us be off!"

Jerry left the room.

"We need not wait for him," remarked Katy, who was in a hurry to be gone; "everything is all right now."

"I won't go before Jerry comes back and tells me so," replied Miss Hogg. "I have no wish to be sent for again, sure. I wish to goodness I never had had a hand in it, that I do."

"So do I," said Katy; "I 'm getting afraid."

"Ah, you shut up; you 're always afraid where there 's danger; all you want is the fun. Well, don't you think that it will be great fun if we can only escape from these detectives? It will be something to tell our grandchildren fifty years from now."

Katy could n't help laughing and admiring her mistress for her cleverness and great courage in time of danger.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

JERRY, alone in his room, wished the job done, and himself far away, fearing to be interrupted and discovered at any moment; he certainly did not relish the idea of drugging Jack. Should he overdose him he was sure to be accused of murdering him, and again Miss Hogg would escape, for, though he could say that it was done by her orders, he was not a child to be forced into doing what he was not willing to do. He felt that he was getting deeper and deeper into her power, and he saw no way of retreating with safety. He opened his door softly, hoping to find Jack asleep and be able to administer the drug without another struggle with him, for he knew that Jack would not submit tamely to the operation, even bound as he was. So, hearing nothing, he supposed that poor Jack had fallen asleep, and pushing the door wide open, he saw to his dismay and horror that the room was empty. The shock was so great that he stood quite still and stunned for a moment, not knowing what to think or do. How he could have escaped was beyond him; the room was at the fifth story; there was no jumping out of the window; the door had not been opened; how had he gone, and where was he at the present moment? He looked under the bed, even under the mattress and in the cupboard in the old press; no Jack anywhere. "O," thought he, "I would do a deal better to decamp and tell Miss Hogg to do the same, and not waste any time here looking for him, for very likely he will be here with a force of police. And how long has he been gone? That 's the question." He turned round with the intention of returning to Miss Hogg and apprising her of this new misfortune, when, hearing footsteps on the stairs, he hid behind the door, having made up his mind to escape, if possible; if the owners of the footsteps were detectives he would allow them to enter the room in quest of him; then, before they had time to turn round, he would dash out of the room, lock them in, and rush out of the house. If it was not guarded outside he might

have a chance; slight, it is true, but still a chance. He would have no time to warn Miss Hogg and Katy, it is true, but that could not be helped, and likely they were both in custody by this time.

All this passed through his mind in less than a minute; he made himself as small as he could behind the door, holding it lightly against himself by the knob. Whoever was coming was entering the room; and, to his great joy and surprise, he saw Miss Hogg and Katy, who looked surprised at not finding Jerry there.

"You must have made a mistake, Katy," said Miss Hogg; "this is not Jerry's room."

"Yes, it is; there 's something wrong, miss."

"Yes," whispered Jerry, from behind the door, and showing himself. Katy would have screamed, but he had taken her by the arm and clapped his hand on her mouth. "Not a word or we are all lost. The detective has escaped; how long ago I can't tell, for I have n't entered the room since five o'clock this morning."

Miss Hogg's nerves must have been made of iron, for, though she gave a start at Jerry's sudden appearance, not a sound did she utter. Turning to Jerry, she asked him, "Have you found out how he left the room?"

"No, miss, that 's what puzzles me; I think we had better decamp, for you may be sure that he will soon be here with the force of police."

"Yes," replied Miss Hogg, "if you are positive that he has left the house."

"He must have done so, for he is nowhere here."

Miss Hogg had been inspecting the room, and had to admit that no one but themselves were in the room.

"How did he get loose?—It 's beyond me," said Jerry.

"Look here," said Miss Hogg; "it is evident that he has cut the ropes you fastened him with by rubbing them on this old iron fender; see, there 's blood on it, and on the floor too!" She bent down to examine it, when all at once she lifted her finger as a signal for silence; at the same time a smile played on her lips, and, without a word, she pointed up the chimney; then, rising, she whispered, "Pile all you can into the grate; he 's up there; I heard him breathe." Then aloud, "Well, John, the fellow is really gone, and the sooner we leave the better."

"Yes, ma'am," said Jerry, with a wink of understanding, and Miss Hogg and her maid hurried out of the room and out of the house without meeting the landlady. They walked for a short distance, and then, taking a cab, were driven to the station, Miss Hogg laughing heartily.

"Well, I never! I did have a fright this time, for if he had escaped, as he wants us to think he had, we would have been met either by Walgrave or some other detective, and finding us in Jerry's company, we would have been arrested for sure. Now I dare them to arrest us! We are going to Dover, and from there to Paris; we have n't the child nor anything suspicious with us; the boy did n't see us, so he can't recognize us were he to meet us. They may suspect, but that is not enough. It has already cost Lady Montgomery four thousand pounds for having suspected me; but it is a blessing that I saw or at least heard the boy, for as soon as we left the room he would have come down, and, the door having been left unlocked, he would have been in the street in a jiffy! Then good-by to all my plans. But here we are at the station. Get two tickets for Dover. Hurry; the train will be in in five minutes;" looking at her watch as she spoke.

Jerry, as soon as Miss Hogg and her maid had left, piled up all he could find into the grate, up the chimney, without uttering a word; then, drawing up the table and the bedstead, he jammed them hard against the fireplace, so that it was impossible for Jack to get out without help. "Now," said Jerry, loud enough for Jack to hear, "you have gone up the chimney of your own accord, and there you must stay. I 'm going to sit here, and if you should take it into your head to call out I 'll light the fire." Having said this he walked out of the room on tiptoe, closing and locking the door without noise, went downstairs, paid the landlady what was due her, said good-by and left the house, leaving poor Jack to get out of the chimney the best way he could.

But how had clever Jack got himself into Jerry's power so completely? He and Mathew had gone in pursuit of Miss Hogg to the railway station, each taking a cab, as we have already related. Mathew missed him at the station and had n't seen him since, but he had n't felt uneasy about him, knowing him to be able to take care of himself.

But it seems that he had been mistaken as to Jack's capacities, or how could he have found himself in the predicament he was now in? Had all this occurred a day later Walgrave would have arrived in time to fulfill his grandest anticipations and would have caught Miss Hogg and all her accomplices in the snuggest way; but, unfortunately, his ill luck seemed to follow him still. He knew nothing of Miss Hogg's having lived in this part of London, Mathew having kept it to himself, fearing that Walgrave would supplant him, and get the honor and reward in this difficult case; and he had only told him on his return from Liverpool, when he had failed so completely in following Miss Hogg.

During his absence Walgrave had been hunting for Jerry with as little success, so the two detectives had agreed to work together and act frankly with each other, hoping by this means to be more successful than heretofore.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

WHAT had happened to Jack after Mathew had lost sight of him at the railway station?

Jerry had seemed very much affected at Miss Hogg's departure, and wiping his eyes on the sleeve of his livery, had driven away, but not before Jack had remarked the mocking smile that had illumined his face, which, to Jack, had seemed to contradict his first emotion of sorrow, which he had displayed so openly.

Now Jack could not tell if this man had acted the hypocrite toward Miss Hogg by his display of sorrow at her departure, or if it had all been a prearranged plan between mistress and servant to blind Mathew, whom they may have recognized. Had Jerry gone away with a sorrowful face Jack would have thought no more of him; but having followed him, he had seen what he supposed was a mocking smile, and he thought, "I 'll leave Miss Hogg to Mr. Mathew, and will find out who this fellow is." So he gave orders to his cabman to follow Jerry's carriage, and so had arrived at Lady Florence's lodgings. But Jerry had not been a poacher for nothing; it was his nature to be always on the alert, and since he had left the steady noise of wheels behind him he had stopped at a public house so as to allow this cab to pass him; it had passed, but, to his horror, he had recognized the boy who had nicely betrayed him once before; so he remained just long enough to swallow a glass of brandy, of which he really felt the need, for he knew that danger was near, and he would have to use all his wits if he hoped to escape the trap that the boy was leading him into. Before he left the public house he had seen the cab repass and turn the corner just behind his carriage, and it would be of no use to try to give him the slip, situated as he was, with a carriage; so he came out boldly, jumped on his box and drove away to the house, in front of which was a van loaded with trunks, boxes, and all kinds of luggage. Jerry jumped down, and accosting one of the men who

were carrying the trunks from the house to the van, said, "You take this here carriage to the stables," ran upstairs to his mother, and in a few words explained what he feared.

"Is he alone?" she asked, referring to Jack.

"I don't know; he may be."

"Well, you must entice him here if you can, not by force, my son, but by cunning; if he is alone there is still a chance of escape for us; go; don't lose a moment."

Jerry had gone down to the van and made himself very busy with the trunks so as to give himself a chance to see if the boy was near; he saw no cabs, but he saw the boy walking about idly, gaping about like an idiot; it was evident that he did n't know Jerry for the same man he had betrayed to Walgrave, but he must have followed him simply because he had been seen with Miss Hogg, and Jerry rejoiced over the fact, and called to him, "Here, my lad, do you want to make a shilling? If so, come here and help me; I 'm half mad with these trunks."

The boy approached, asking, "What do you want me to do?"

"I want you to turn all these trunks on end so that I can stick on the tags; perhaps you 'll be able to do that too; what do you say?"

"O, I can do that," Jack replied, rejoicing at his luck; it was more than he had expected. He would be able to see where these things were going, and he thought it strange that Miss Hogg had not sent all her luggage together. He had seen that morning one van full leave the house, but somehow it had appeared to him that the house was higher up; but it could not be; he must have made a mistake; so he began to help Jerry to set the trunks on end.

"Now," said Jerry, "we have more trunks yet; I 'll go upstairs and fetch them and will bring you the labels at the same time."

Jerry ran upstairs, and soon came down with a large trunk on his back, threw it into the van, and was about to return to the house when Jack called out, "Where are the labels?"

"O, the devil take the labels! I forgot them; you can come up and fetch them," he replied, seeming annoyed

at having to carry the trunks. "I look well carrying boxes, don't I?" he said, as he went on ahead of the boy, who was only too glad to see what was going on inside the house.

Jerry walked into a back room where there were more trunks with labels.

"Where are the labels?" asked the boy, not in the least suspecting that he had walked into a trap.

"Wait," replied Jerry; "let's take these boxes to the landing; you can help me, and then I'll look for the labels."

Jack obeyed, and when all the luggage was out of the room Jerry went in again to fetch the labels, Jack following at his heels. Jerry slammed the door to as if by accident, pretending to be looking among old papers behind it.

"Well, devil take me, I can't see them and I had a whole bunch of them."

Jack was searching also, not so much for the labels as for any scraps of writing that might have been left among these papers, for he was a real detective, always on the alert to discover people's secrets, and at that moment he felt perfectly happy thinking of what he would have to tell Mr. Walgrave, for he had succeeded beyond his most sanguine expectations—he was in the enemy's camp, unsuspected by them. O, but that was grand! and a smile played on his lips which soon changed into a half-smothered groan, when he felt a heavy hand on his neck, as he was bending down at the time; it came unexpectedly to him in the midst of his happy dreams; and another hand was clapped on his then smiling lips, and a voice which he fancied he had heard somewhere before—not that day—said in his ear, "You miserable spy, you won't take my money and betray me; if you utter one word I'll twist your neck as I would a rabbit's," giving him a good shake to make him understand that he would do what he threatened.

Jack was thunderstruck, and saw at once that he was caught, and also that he had had too much confidence in himself in believing himself to be more clever than the man he had been following. He owned now, to his sorrow, that this coachman was more than a match for him in bodily strength and cleverness, and he saw that if he

was to escape it would not be by struggling with the man, but by cunning; so he did not cry out after the first groan, but remained perfectly still, with a look of defiance on his face which showed plainly that had he been a man there would have been a terrible struggle for liberty. He only said, "You 're a sneak to have entrapped me so meanly."

"I 'm not going to waste words with you," replied Jerry; "I 'm going to tie you up;" as he produced some cords from a cupboard, with one hand, while with the other he held on to Jack's neck, and in less than ten minutes had bound him hand and foot with a large towel over his mouth, leaving his nose free.

It would be impossible to describe poor Jack's feelings and disappointment, and, worse than all, no one knew where he was. Mathew had gone after Miss Hogg and had expected him to follow, so he had no hopes in that quarter. Walgrave had gone to look for Jerry. Then it came upon him like a flash. This man was Jerry; he had betrayed himself by using his own natural voice when he had laid his hand so lovingly on his neck. Well, he had made a discovery he might use later on, but he had no hope in Walgrave, for he had told him that very morning that he had no idea where Miss Hogg had gone after leaving the hotel, but that he suspected Mathew of knowing and of keeping the fact to himself. So poor Jack would have to depend upon himself to make his escape, but how he was to manage it was more than he could say.

Jerry threw him on the bed and left the room, locking the door after him.

Jack now knew why Jerry had removed all the luggage from the room; he could hear him taking it down and likely putting on the addresses, while he, poor Jack, would never know where it was sent. O, how he blamed himself for having allowed Jerry to trap him as he had done! What business had he to put himself in his power? Why had he not been satisfied to watch him from a distance, and not walk into the lion's den as he had done? The poor boy fretted and worried himself to such an extent that the perspiration rolled down his face like beads; he tried with all his might to break the ropes that

bound him, but he might have saved his strength for a better purpose, as he only tightened the knots in the rope, which was strong, such as is used to tie trunks; it also cut into the flesh; and as he felt his helplessness he cried with rage, biting the towel that covered his mouth, and wondering what they intended doing with him, and how long he was to stay there. Had Jerry gone away and left him? If he had been sure that Jerry had left the house he would have managed to make some kind of a noise to attract the landlady, or some one else who would release him; but he feared that should Jerry still be in the house he would be running a great risk; so he waited, and wisely, too; for just as it was getting dark Jerry came in with some food, and, locking the door, he put the tray on the table, and untying Jack's hands and removing the towel from his mouth he said, "Now, youngster, sit up and eat, but don't try any of your tricks on me, for if I see any signs of your trying to either escape or call out, by Jingo, I'll pitch you out of the window, which is five stories high, and unless you can fly you will come to grief."

"But what are you going to do with me?" asked the boy.

"Wait and see, my lad; your inquisitiveness has already led you into trouble; so eat and go to sleep; I'm going to stay with you all night and to-morrow we shall see."

Jerry having carried the trunks down, addressed some of them to Dover, and others to Hastings, not daring to put down Antwerp before he reached there.

In the meantime Katy had arrived and had been told how matters stood. She was shocked and frightened; her knees trembled and gave way under her, but after details were given her courage returned, though she would give no orders concerning Jack until she heard from Miss Hogg; so she had sent the telegram to Dover, knowing that if everything went right she would arrive that night, and, as we have seen, she did not receive it. Jerry had watched for her all night, going to his room occasionally to see if Jack was safe. He had tied him up again and he seemed asleep a part of the night. As Miss Hogg did not come another telegram had been sent early in the morning.

Jerry, his mother, and Katy were very anxious. What could have happened to Miss Hogg to keep her away at such a time, and what were they to do with the boy detective? They were in a fever of suspense, for a search would be made for the boy, and what would happen to them? Every step they heard made them start, and when the little boy brought the note for Katy she trembled all over; but her fears soon changed into joy as she recognized Miss Hogg's writing. After reading it she told Jerry that Miss Hogg was at the back door, and that he must run in while she kept the landlady talking, running down after her she called to her, asking, as an excuse, who brought the note; and going to the front door, she looked up and down the street, and the landlady pointed out to her the small boy who had brought it, while Jerry had gone to the back door, as we have seen; and when Jerry came back and showed the landlady the note that Katy had handed him for that purpose, the landlady had laughed heartily, thinking that Katy had gone to meet her sweetheart; and seeing Katy return after a few minutes, with her apron over her head, sobbing, had strengthened her belief yet more.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE next morning, that is the morning after Jack went up the chimney, Mathew went to the railway station and made inquiries about the lad, but no one had seen him; so he hunted up the cabman and learned from him how he had been ordered to follow the same carriage they had followed to the station, though there was no one in it; and how the coachman had gone to have a drink in a public, and they had to go on ahead so as not to be suspected of following; then, while the coachman was inside they had gone back and hidden away around the corner till they had seen him come out again; he looked neither to the right nor to the left, but jumped on his box and drove away, and they followed till he stopped at the house. They had seen him in the morning, maybe a little lower down, it seemed to him; the lad got down from the cab, paid him, saying, "I don't want you any more," and that 's the last he had seen of him.

Mathew gave the cabman half a crown, and, jumping into the cab, said, "Drive on to the same house."

Now let us see how Walgrave is getting on in his search. He arrived early at the house that Miss Hogg had occupied with her mother, and was received by the landlady, who told him that her tenants had left two days before for America. They had been very profitable to her, and she was sorry she had lost them. Walgrave looked blank for there was no clew there. The landlady spoke sincerely; there was no doubting her.

"But," he asked, "did not Miss Hogg come back the same night for something she had forgotten?"

"No, sir; nothing had been left here. Why do you ask? Has Miss Hogg complained of having lost anything?"

"No, no; I must have been mistaken, that 's all; thank you. Good morning." And he walked out, not knowing where to look for news of Miss Hogg, as he muttered, "I ought to have known better than to have

come here looking for her; she would never have come back here; but where am I to look? I am really unlucky, or getting dull. That Mathew will get ahead of me yet; he will find Jack, who must be on Miss Hogg's track, and afraid to lose her; but why did n't he write to me?—for Jack belongs to me. Hello! What 's all this crowd here for?" as he noticed a crowd of people a few doors below. "I must see, since I have nothing else to do till I get a clew, and Mathew is to meet me here." So he marched right into the midst of the crowd as though he had a right to be there; and, entering the house, met the landlady in the hallway, who asked him if he were a doctor. "Yes," replied Walgrave, not wishing to have it known that he was a detective, and very anxious to know what was going on upstairs.

"Come this way, then;" and she preceded him upstairs to the fifth story, opening the door of a back room where many people stood around something black—a small sized man, moaning with pain. No one seemed in a hurry to touch him; the floor was covered with soot, the furniture all in disorder. It looked to Walgrave as if the black object had rolled down the chimney, and he thought, "This is as much a matter for the police as for the doctor."

Walgrave walked straight up to the object, the crowd making room for him; he bent over it; yes, it was a man, or, more correctly speaking, a boy, with his eyes wide open. As soon as he saw Walgrave he brightened up and whispered, "It 's me, Mr. Walgrave; don't you know me?"

Walgrave gave a start; he had recognized Jack's voice, and turning to the landlady he said, "Send one of your servants for water and towels and leave the room; I must be alone with this boy." She obeyed him, and he soon had Jack's face clean. He sent one of the servants to buy a new shirt, etc., for him. He soon had him clean; his hands were badly cut, but otherwise he had sustained no injury. A good wash had relieved him of the suffocating sensation that had oppressed him; the fresh air and the sight of Mr. Walgrave revived him entirely, though he looked sheepish, for he feared to have lost Mr. Walgrave's good opinion; he felt that he had acted like a fool.

"Now, my boy," said the detective, "when you have

had something to eat you will tell us how you come to be here and in such a state."

"Thank you, Mr. Walgrave, I was afraid that you would be angry with me. I have not eaten since the night before last, and I 'm famished."

Walgrave was shocked; he asked the landlady for a private room and a good breakfast for the boy, telling her that she would be well paid for her trouble. Jack was soon eating like two men; he was still at it when a knock was heard at the front door, and soon after a step ascending the stairs, which stopped outside the door where Walgrave and Jack were. After a hurried knock, the door opened, Mathew appeared on the threshold, and for a moment remained there transfixed with astonishment at seeing Walgrave there and Jack eating away as if he wanted to take in enough for a week to come

"I 'm blamed if I can make you out," he at last exclaimed, coming in and taking a chair. Turning to Walgrave, he said, "So you 've found him, eh; where was he?"

"I don't know myself how he came here," replied Walgrave; "he will tell us as soon as he has satisfied his hunger. The poor fellow has had nothing to eat for nearly two days, he tells me. And how did you find your way here, Mathew?"

"O, I found the cabman who brought back Jack from the station where he had last seen the boy; so I came to investigate and I find you here lost in admiration at his capacity for making food disappear. Have you bet on him?" He laughed heartily, for he was pleased to have found the boy, and he expected to hear great things from him concerning Miss Hogg, and he longed to know how he came to be two days without food.

Poor Jack blushed with shame at the quantity he had eaten, and declared himself ready to relate all that had happened to him since he had seen Mr. Mathew at the station following Miss Hogg. As the reader already knows what had happened up to the time that Jerry left Jack in his own room at about five o'clock, we will take up our story from that time.

"Well," said Mathew, "when the coachman that you say you had recognized as the man you saw at the coffee

shop had left you so long that you thought he must have left the house, what did you do, my lad?"

"Yes, tell us," said Walgrave, who had listened very attentively to Jack's recital.

"O, sir, it was so dreadful that I hate to think of it. I was so stiff, being tied up all night, and part of the day before, and I was so enraged at being caught, that I cried a good deal, and felt such a hatred towards that man that if I had had the chance I would have killed him."

"Tut, tut," said Mathew; "you 'll never make a good detective if you feel like that. For my part, the harder a case is the better I like it, as long as I succeed at the end; and when I have to hunt down a clever rogue I often admire his tactics and sometimes profit by them in another case. That 's how we get our experience, my boy. But go on or Mr. Walgrave will get impatient."

"No, Mathew, I admire your coolness in a difficult case, and I often wish that I could imitate you and not let my temper run away with my better judgment, but I can't; consequently I often make bad blood and mistakes."

"Come, Mr. Walgrave, that 's too good; you don't expect me to swallow that as I would an oyster; why, I can't hold a candle to you, as every one knows; I do my best, but I 'm not so vain as to think myself at the head of our force yet. Go on, Jack."

"Well, after having a good cry I felt better, and I began to reflect that I ought to try to get away at any risk, and, if found, I could only be taken again, and no worse off than I was then; and if I could manage to escape before they left the house I would run to Mr. Walgrave and he might catch them yet. That thought gave me courage, and I managed to roll off the bed on to the floor with as little noise as possible; and I rolled about to find some sort of sharp instrument on which I could rub the cords that bound me so as to cut them; I saw nothing but that old iron fender. I rolled myself there and managed to get it under me, and I began to saw away with all my might, and often rubbed my hands and wrists on it instead of the cord. I felt the blood running down my sleeves, but I was so angry that I did n't mind in the least if I cut my wrist off. I felt no pain, though I do now. The cord was beginning to give way, and after working about an hour,

which seemed twenty-four hours to me, it gave way entirely and my hands were free, but so numbed with having been tied so long, and by the effort I had made to get free, that at first I could n't use them, no, not to have saved my life; and I could n't even untie my feet for ever so long, do what I would. At last I did, and they were as bad as my hands had been. I felt mad with impatience for I was losing time; the man might come in at any moment and all my labor would have gone for nothing.

"At last I stood up and began to look for a way to get out. I went to the window, but it was so high from the ground that I saw it would be madness to try that. Even if I had a rope long enough to reach the yard I could not have got down without being seen from the window beneath me, in the daytime as it was, and as I looked in the yard what did I see but the coachman going to the back door; so he had n't left the house. I trembled, for he might come up at any moment. But perhaps he was going away, for he opened the back door and went out, but he soon came in again and walked briskly toward the house as if he had forgotten something, or perhaps he was coming to me. Where could I hide? Not under the bed or in the cupboard, for he would be sure to look there. I had no time to unfasten the window, and had I done so he would never have believed that I had jumped down. So I went about the room like a rat in a trap, dancing with rage.

"At last I looked at the fireplace—would the chimney be large enough for me to get in? I might hide there for a few moments till he had reached the room, and, making sure that I had escaped somehow, would leave the room, and not lock the door; then I could slip out and hide somewhere in the house till I could find a chance to get out.

"All this passed through my mind in less than a minute, and I forced myself into the chimney just high enough not to be seen, and waited at least ten minutes. I was on the point of coming down again when I heard the key turn in the lock; I had n't heard any footsteps; still, some one was in the room looking for me, for I heard a voice say in a half whisper,'Where can he be? How long has he been gone? O, we are lost!' Then some one else came in—two women, by their voices—one came very

near the chimney and I believe she must have guessed that I was there, though I had heard her say, 'O, he must have gone, so we had better go too.' Then some whispering, and the two women left. The man remained and began to stuff things up the chimney and drag the furniture about toward the fireplace, and I knew that he was piling up the furniture so that I could n't come down without help. I had a mind to scream to attract the attention of some of the inmates of the house, but I soon realized that I could n't be heard, being in the chimney, and the fireplace all stopped up, and at the fifth story too; so I stayed quite still, trusting to chance and my efforts to get free as soon as the man left the room; but my heart jumped into my mouth as I heard him say, 'You 've got up the chimney of your own accord, and there you shall stay; and if you call out I 'll light the fire.' I believed the man would do it, for he might have said, 'How could I know anyone was in the chimney?' and no one would have blamed him; and as I would have been dead I could n't have told that he had made me a prisoner in his room, that I was trying to escape, and that he knew I was there. So I made no answer, thinking, 'I may as well die here as be murdered by him if I call out.' "

"But how did you get out?" asked Walgrave, impatiently; "that 's what I want to know."

"I 'm coming to it," replied Jack.

I may as well say here that Jack's recital was not given in these words, but to the same effect; for his English consisted of slang, accentuated with strong words which I would be sorry to write; he was a cunning street boy, clever but coarse and low in his ways, and certainly his language was anything but choice; it was very hard to understand and quite incomprehensible to refined, well brought-up people; so I have thought it best to use my own words in recording what had happened to Jack.

Having explained that much I shall go on with my story, leaving my readers to understand that Jack was anything but a well brought-up boy; still, he had a great and good opinion of himself, which was a drawback to him. If that had not been the case he would not have been caught by Jerry.

"Well, sir, I 'm coming to it. How long the man

remained in the room I don't know; for after the piling up of the furniture everything was quiet, and I believed that he was sitting there watching to prevent my coming down. I thought afterwards he must have left the room as soon as he had threatened me with lighting the fire if I dared to scream. However that may be, I waited, situated as I was, I can't tell how long, for the time seemed much longer than it really was, and I was almost choked for want of air, and with the soot which blinded me and sent a prickly sensation down my threat. If I could only have had a glass of water how thankful I would have been! But as I was not likely to get it until I got out I allowed myself to slip as far as it was possible for me to do, and came down on the handle of a broom, which was anything but a soft seat and made me halloo with pain; and in my descent I had brought down such a quantity of soot that I was half buried in it. I tried to kick the things out of the fireplace. I must have been standing on a large saucepan full of water, for something gave way under my feet, and I found my feet deep in water getting thick with soot. I tried to bend down to remove it, after getting my feet out, and in doing so my face came in contact with a nail on which hung a frying pan, and it made the scratch you see on my right cheek."

"Yes, and a deep one too," said Mathew.

"Well, I managed to upset the saucepan, but it did n't go far; it simply rolled against the furniture that closed the fireplace entirely, for it was a table, as I heard the landlady say later on; then the bedstead was against the table to keep it in its place. Well, I found out that I could n't go any further, so I kicked and called out at the top of my voice, but no one came, so I left off for a while thinking perhaps every one was in bed, for it must have been night; I 'd try and wait till morning when people would be about. So there I remained in a heap among the saucepans, kettles, brooms, and other rubbish, and, worse than all, the wet soot. I was so miserable and hungry, that putting my hand to my face I cried bitterly and swore vengeance on the man who was the cause of it all. I would kill him if ever I found him again, and I ground my teeth with rage, and bit at my coat sleeves to relieve my anger, but it only increased it and filled my

mouth with soot and half choked me. I never found a night so long.

"At last I heard footsteps going down the stairs—I suppose the servants—and I began to halloo and kick for dear life. I heard some women screaming, and running down at breakneck pace; then, after a while, during which I kept on bellowing and kicking, I heard a good many footsteps on the stairs, the door was tried, and a woman's voice said, 'Where is the key? How came this room to be locked? It's empty. You must have been dreaming, Mary.'

"I had stopped calling out to listen, but I began again with greater vigor. 'Now, mum, do you hear it? Perhaps it's a ghost.' 'Don't be a fool, Mary, there are no ghosts in the daytime; more likely it is one of the men that was helping to carry the luggage yesterday; he may have got drunk and gone to sleep in the empty room; run down and get me my bunch of keys, I'll surely have one to fit.' Mary ran down to obey her mistress, but in passing through the hall she heard the milkman at the front door, so she ran to open it and told the man that a drunkard had got himself locked up in a room upstairs—would he go up and help them? 'Certainly,' he said, and after getting the keys Mary went up with him, leaving the front door open, and some of the passers-by, who had heard what Mary had told the milkman, stayed around the door and very soon there was a crowd—the same that attracted Mr. Walgrave. The landlady managed to unlock the door but was afraid to go in, and the milkman was also afraid, but he didn't say so, and advised that they all go in together; but as the landlady saw her furniture all in confusion she raised her hands over her head and screamed out, 'My goodness gracious! What has happened? There's no one here, but everything is upset. Whoever did it? Not the coachman who occupied this room, for he was the nicest and quietest man alive.' I called out, 'O, please do get me out, I'm dying!' 'Why, there's some one in the chimney,' said the milkman; and they all helped to drag the furniture away, and as they removed the table I rolled down in the middle of the floor with the saucepan and kettle, and dragged the poker and shovel with me in my descent, and there I remained, no one daring to approach me till you

came, though I saw a good many people standing in the doorway.

"The landlady said something about going for a doctor, as I did n't move; I could n't. I had been cramped up in the same position so long that I wanted time to recover the use of my limbs; and that 's all I have to tell except that I 've been a fool to allow that fellow to trap me."

"You 're right," replied Walgrave, "always keep your freedom, for one man in freedom is worth a thousand in captivity; so beware of mantraps, and fight for liberty to the last." Happening to look at Mathew, who had a twinkle of merriment in his bright black eyes at the recollection of the fight they had had in Jerry's room, they both laughed heartily. Jack thought they were laughing at his explanation and he looked sulky.

"Well, what are we to do now?" said Walgrave, as soon as he was able to speak.

"If you don't object," said Mathew, "we will have the landlady here and question her."

They rang the bell and asked the servant who appeared to ask her mistress to come up. She came. She was a ladylike person of middle age, dressed in black silk. When she came in she looked rather cautiously at the two, having already guessed that they were detectives, but she was at a loss to know if they were after the boy, and if that was the reason he had gone up the chimney; and yet that could hardly have been the case, for the first one who came would not have cared so well for the boy as he had done.

Mathew gave her a chair and left the task of interrogating her to Walgrave, who said, "You had lodgers named Hogg—the mother and little girl—they left yesterday, did they not?"

"You are in error, sir," answered the landlady; "I never had anyone of that very peculiar name. The people who left yesterday were a little girl of about eight years of age—a perfect lady; then her nurse, Mrs. Martin, and a man servant—a coachman, I believe, to the young lady's family; his name was Smith."

"Do you mean to say that the child was here with these two servants alone?"

"Well, yes, sir, the greater part of the time; though

sometimes I have seen a young lady of about twenty—her sister, I was told by the nurse—come with a carriage to take her for a ride, but not often, though she visited her nearly every day; also her maid; and they brought toys and things to the child."

"But why was she kept in such close retirement—did they tell you, madam?"

"O, yes, she had been ill and had to be kept quiet till she had quite recovered her strength."

"Did not her mother visit her also?"

"No, sir; she had returned to America before the child was taken ill; but she was well cared for."

"What was her name?"

"Isabelle de Courtney."

Walgrave gave a start as he heard the name, but continued:

"Did the child say that that was her name?"

"No, sir; but I have heard her nurse call her Miss Isabelle, and the child never said that it was not her name."

"Did she look unhappy?"

"Certainly not; how could she? Her slightest wishes were obeyed. She did n't seem to wish to go out unless her sister came for her in the carriage. Why do you ask, sir?"

"O, nothing, nothing; I have made a mistake; that 's all. I thank you very much for the information you have given me, and I am really sorry to have troubled you. Here is five pounds to pay for the damage done to your room, and for the boy's breakfast;" and he and Mathew arose, knowing that they had heard all that they wanted to, and that this child was really Lady Florence and that the nurse and coachman were Jerry and his mother; and they left the house with Jack, not knowing what would be their next move.

The matter was discussed in Walgrave's room, and they came to the conclusion that it would be best to wire to all the stations and find out, if possible, if any people answering the description of Miss Hogg and her associates had been seen; also to the office of every steamer that had left port since the day before, or was about to leave, for some time to come, and arrest any of them that might

have a little girl of eight years with them. This was considered the best course to pursue until they had a clew; so Jack was sent to the telegraph office for that purpose, and Walgrave and Mathew remained to discuss what had lately happened.

"What puzzles me," said Walgrave as soon as Jack had left the room, "is that, from what we have heard, Lady Florence seems reconciled to be with Jerry and his mother and seems friendly with Miss Hogg. I wonder if it is another trick of Miss Hogg, and it is not Lady Florence any more than was the other one."

"O, come, that would be too strong this time; my belief is that we are on the right track at last; if we can only get a clew we will run her down. The mother is quite innocent and has been made a tool of. Now that she has gone to America with the real Isabelle de Courtney we will soon catch Miss Hogg with Lady Florence; but I think it will be wise not to say anything to Lady Montgomery till we have succeeded."

"You are right," replied Walgrave; "I was on the point of saying so, for we have failed so often that I am ashamed; so let us make sure of Lady Florence, and have her well in hand before we venture to write to Lady Montgomery."

"Agreed," said Mathew.

Jack soon returned, bringing a lot of answers to the telegrams that had been sent, but only one was worth anything to the detectives. It was from Dover; it said that a lady with her maid, answering the description sent, had left the evening previous for Paris via Calais; they had been staying at the British Hotel; nothing more was known; no fair little girl had been seen either in the company of the tall dark young lady, or with anyone else, but a watch had been set.

"Aha," said Walgrave, impatiently; "she's going to lead us another wild goose chase; I feel it; she will entice us to go after her while some one else will go another way with the young lady; she must be a devil incarnate. What a detective she would make!"

Mathew laughed at Walgrave's excitement and said, "What a help she would be to her husband were he a detective! By Jove, if I were not already married I

would go in for her! Now there 's a chance for you, who are an old bachelor; she 'll make your fortune in less than no time."

"My dear fellow, there would be no show for me were I so disposed; if I had a title to my name it might be different, though I am no longer young—forty last month, my boy—and she can't be much more than twenty; still, those Americans don't look much to the man; it 's the title they want. Do you remember that old *roué,* Lord Brainless, who married that young and pretty American girl last year? He had n't a penny, and had ruined his health to the last degree; yet how glad she was to have him for the sake of being called Lady Brainless; and she actually told her mother that she must call her my lady. And yet it is said that Americans do not care for titles. Why, they would give their skins for one. But to return to Miss Hogg: I should be afraid of her. How fierce she can look at a fellow! You have no idea. I wish you could have seen her ordering me out of her mother's room. I felt like a fool when she pulled off my false beard."

"What! You don't mean to say that Miss Hogg did that to you?"

"Indeed she did; she is more like a trooper than like a young lady. O, may I be preserved from such a wife, my boy! Now, one of us will have to go after her—which shall it be, you or I? To tell you the truth, I have a horror of going. I am positive she would try to make a fool of me again, and I don't want to be made a fool of."

"Well, I 'll go;" said Mathew; "I 'm really attracted to her; her clever tricks please me, and we are sure to run her down in the end. My opinion is that Jerry and his mother will join her somewhere with the child, and if I follow her I will arrive there and net the whole lot; but I must have a letter from our captain so that I may enlist the French police in our interest; they are clever men. How I do wish that I could speak French! Of course they have interpreters, but that is never the same."

"Well," said Walgrave, rising, "come along; let us go to headquarters and get a letter from the captain; you have no time to lose. There 's a steamer leaving Dover this evening; you had better leave by it."

"Certainly; the sooner the better. And what are your plans, Mr. Walgrave?"

"I will stay here ready to follow Jerry and his mother should I get a clew. They will try to leave England, you may depend upon that; not by way of Dover, perhaps, but by some other route; they might go by Southampton to Havre."

"And what is Jack going to do?"

"Well, I don't see any work for him at present; he can go back to his shoeblacking, and keep his eyes open; but I don't see that he can help any more in this case, since all parties have or will have left England; but I'll get him on some other case before long, for he's clever."

Jack's face brightened at these words, for he had feared that he was dismissed on account of his last mishap.

Mathew, after receiving a letter from his captain, parted with Walgrave; they wished each other success. He soon reached Dover, and, going straight to the British Hotel, made inquiries and learned everything about Miss Hogg's telegram, as the reader already knows, and that evening left Dover for Calais and there saw the prefect of police, gave him the letter, and was assured that everything in their power should be done to help him. The customhouse people were questioned and they remembered the lady and her maid; their trunks were addressed to Paris.

"All right;" said the prefect; "you wire along the line and make sure that they did really reach Paris, and find out at what hotel the lady is staying; bring the answer to my house."

The man hurried to obey, while the prefect took Mathew to his house to dinner. The prefect spoke a little English, so that the dinner passed off very well. The Frenchman was jolly, and so was Mathew, so that they got on extremely well together, and Mathew relished his *café a l'eau de vie* and the *canard* which followed.

In less than two hours a telegram arrived. The prefect opened it and said, "*Ma foi,* here's good news for you; the American lady and her maid have really gone to Paris, are staying at *l'hôtel de Paris,* and have met some of their American friends; there is nothing suspicious about

them; the mistress is going to the opera this evening with her friends; she seems to be settled, and means to stay at the hotel for some time; that 's all we know about her; but some of our best men are on the watch, and will not lose sight of her till relieved by the English detective."

"Well, Mr. Mathew, what do you think of that in so short a time, eh?" asked the prefect with some pride.

"It is wonderful," replied Mathew; " your police system is very much superior to ours."

"No, no, monsieur, but it is good," answered the prefect, politely. "I am going to give you a letter of introduction to Mr. Robert, one of our best men, and if between you, you don't catch this American demoiselle tripping, then I wish her success; she will deserve it."

Mathew, having received his letter, thanked the prefect for his kindness and left for Paris, which he reached in due time.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

MATHEW was entranced with the beauty of the city; never had he seen anything to equal it. London is a grand and beautiful city, but there are too many factories and too much smoke; it is not clean, like beautiful Paris, which is a pleasant city where the sun always shines brightly and the skies are blue, not gray, as in London. Mathew had never dreamed of such grandeur—the Champs Elysées, the Tuileries, the Palais Impérial, the Bourse, l'Eglise de Notre Dame, the Seine, which divides the city; the pleasure boats sailing up and down the Seine, the palatial houses of the aristocracy, the theaters, opera houses, grand markets, flowers and fruits unequaled; the grand shops with their splendid displays of silks, satins, mantles, shawls, hats, bonnets, parasols; jewelers' shops, with the richest sets of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, garnets, opals, and every other description of precious stones; grand furniture, so handsome, yet so substantial. Mathew was dazed—lost in admiration before so much grandeur. He saw a great many equipages going towards the Barrière, and was told that some were going to the Bois de Boulogne and others to Versailles; the beautiful picture galleries and splendid gardens attract many people, and it is a nice ride. He took a seat in the shadow of the tall and beautiful trees, and looked at every carriage that passed; he saw that there were people of all nationalities; the French, with their merry, jovial countenances, the Germans, with their stern, fair and fat faces, the English, with their plain equipages and air of calm dignity, which cannot be surpassed; the Americans, with their flashy equipages, showy toilets, loud voices and laughter. Mathew saw many carriages, and wondered if he would see Miss Hogg in one of them.

A French gentleman had sat on the same bench as Mathew for some time, and he also seemed lost in admiration; looking at the occupants of the carriages, and smiling complacently to himself, and as if in answer,

to Mathew's thoughts, he said to him, "Ah, monsieur, there she is in the green and yellow carriage, and one of the footmen behind is Robert the detective—the fat, short one—do you see him, monsieur?"

Mathew was so surprised that he stared at the gentleman, then at the carriage, and sure enough, there was Miss Hogg, very much overdressed, and another lady, older than herself, and two gentlemen facing them on the front seat; they were laughing loudly. Miss Hogg saw Mathew, and she kissed the tips of her fingers to him and laughed heartily; then the carriage was gone. Mathew felt that he had been very imprudent to show himself in such a public place. He turned to the gentleman at his side and inquired how he came to know him and his object in coming to Paris. "*Mon cher monsieur,* I saw you leave the train station and I have been near you ever since. I saw Miss Hogg at the hotel and I got the situation of footman for Robert. Of course she does not know that I am a detective; she only knows that I am going away and no longer require a footman; and as Robert speaks English almost as well as French, she was delighted to have him. He will come to see you every night, and report whatever is suspicious in Miss Hogg's conduct; and should she take it into her head to make a trip somewhere he will manage to go with her as interpreter, and, if possible, in such an event he will send you word."

Mathew thanked him, and was lost in admiration of the cleverness of the French detectives, and he felt ashamed of his own inferiority. The gentleman laughed heartily, shook hands with Mathew, and left him to recover his equilibrium. Mathew had been considerably upset by the superior knowledge of the French detective, who seemed to know all about him. He must also know his present address, for he had not asked him for it.

All this was very good and clever; still, Mathew did not relish being watched, however much he might like to watch others. He returned to his hotel and promised himself to assume a disguise which would throw the French police off his track. He should have done so before Miss Hogg had recognized him and laughed in his face. This was a bad beginning; she would be on her guard; he had not intended that she should know that he was still

after her. What business had he to go to such a public place? The fact was that Mathew was so lost in admiration of the beauty of Paris that for the time being he had entirely forgotten Miss Hogg and his mission in Paris; but what was done could not be undone. Miss Hogg and her maid would be sure to be on the lookout for him; happily she had fallen into the French detective's trap by taking his supposed footman, who would not leave her for a minute and would report to him, and between them they surely would locate her if she tried to visit Lady Florence, as she would be sure to do sooner or later; it would be only a matter of time; still, he felt annoyed that she had recognized him. And to kiss her fingers to him! What a mockery! As if to say, "Do your worst; I defy you!"

Mathew having returned to his hotel, which was in a side street, at some distance from the Hôtel de Paris, waited for M. Robert, wondering if he would come; he did come, but in the evening, and no longer dressed as a lackey, but as a gentleman; and, though short and rather stout, he was good looking, his pointed mustaches reaching nearly to his eyes when he smiled; his dark blue eyes were full of fire; he looked like a man of the world who knew how to enjoy himself; no one would have suspected him of being a detective.

The French and the English detective looked hard at one another as if to read each other's thoughts, and to measure each other's strength and ability as detectives, and each thought himself a match for the other, and they felt so equal that they both determined to bring all their ability into play and to win this hard case.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

MONSIEUR ROBERT had remained near the door, looking at the handsome English detective, who had risen from his chair to receive his visitor, but had determined not to speak first for fear of betraying himself should this gentleman not prove to be a detective, but he had not long to wait, for the Frenchman came forward with his hand extended and a smile on his face, saying, "Ah, Monsieur Mathew is a wise man, and knows that silence is golden. I am your very humble servant, François Robert."

"Happy to see you, Monsieur Robert," said Mathew. "I thought it was you, still, I thought it better to make sure. I see that I have no need to introduce myself, for you seem to know me better than I do myself."

"Ah, ha, ha," laughed M. Robert; "you are prudent; that's good; we shall soon understand one another."

"Thanks to you, Monsieur Robert," replied Mathew, "for I don't speak one word of French, I am sorry to say."

"O, monsieur will soon learn; he is clever."

"Yes," thought Mathew; "he is going to try to bamboozle me with all his flattery." Then he asked: "Anything about Miss Hogg that will lead us a step nearer to solving this great mystery?"

"No, monsieur, not yet; I am one of her footmen, and wherever she goes I go to interpret for her, unless she has some lady friend who speaks French."

"Where is she to-night?"

"At a ball given by the American consul, and she will not be home before three o'clock in the morning."

"And the maid, where is she, for she is almost as dangerous as her mistress."

"Ah, ha, ha," laughed M. Robert; "she is a little coquette; we are getting on nicely together. I have cut the other footman out because he can't talk English; still, she makes eyes at him and has learned to say *'mon cher ami'* in no time. I shall try to pump her about her mis-

tress when we know each other better, even if I have to propose to her in order to do it. Everything is fair in a case like this;" and he laughed heartily.

Mathew smiled at the idea of this gentlemanly man making love to Miss Hogg's maid; surely she would be hard to please if she refused him. Time will show if Katy was caught by the French detective. Very little more was said between Mathew and the detective that night; the time had been too short to have discovered much about Miss Hogg's movements; so they parted with the understanding that Robert would call every night, and if something of importance occurred in the daytime he would let him know.

"Look here," said Mathew, "you must have a key to this room, and come in whenever you wish, and if I should be out write what you have to say, for I can't be here all the time. So take this key and I will get another from the hotel keeper; I 'll tell him that I 've lost mine. Wait, I 'll go out with you." He locked the door and gave the key to Robert, saying, "When I come back they will have to give me a key or I can't get in; they will think I have lost mine."

"Very good, very good, Monsieur Mathew," said Robert.

They left the hotel together, but soon separated, not wishing to be seen together.

Some days passed. M. Robert came every night, but had nothing to report; there really was nothing suspicious in Miss Hogg's conduct nor in that of her maid; they seldom went out together except to shop; the mistress went her own way with her friends, and Katy did the same, and had actually gone out walking with M. Robert, but so far he had gained nothing by it.

One evening about a week after Miss Hogg's arrival he came to Mathew and said, "I have something to tell you this time; it may not be of any importance and yet it may; it is this: while out walking with Catherine, or Katy, as her mistress calls her, she asked me to take her to the general post office to see if there was a letter for her; I pretended to be jealous, but she very soon made me understand that I had not gained a very great power over her heart, for she exclaimed, 'O, my heart, if you are

going to bother me with your jealousy I 'll send you to the right about in a jiffy; you 're not the only pebble on the beach;' and she pulled her hand away from my arm. I had to play the humble to be allowed to accompany her."

"Did she get a letter?" asked Mathew, impatiently.

"Yes, and addressed to herself; she showed it to me triumphantly, and kissing it she put it into her pocket. I tried to coax her to open it, but it was no go, and we nearly quarreled over it; pushing me away, she walked ahead of me, expecting me to walk behind her, but I did n't do it, as I wanted to go back to the post office to ascertain where the letter had come from, and I had provoked the quarrel for that purpose. She looked back before turning the corner, but I pretended to be looking into a shop, and she tossed up her head defiantly and disappeared. I waited to make sure that she did not intend to come back; then I walked briskly back to the post office and asked the postmaster to inquire, and knowing me, he did so. The letter was posted in Paris; in fact, at that very same post office where Katy had got it, which seemed suspicious to me, and as if the party who wrote it did n't wish any one in Paris to know in what part he lived; and why not have sent it to the hotel unless he or she, as the case may be, did not know where Katy was staying; I leave it for you to judge."

"It seems suspicious, and must have come from Jerry or his mother," replied Mathew. "I knew that they would follow her. Now you watch if Katy goes out to post a letter to-morrow, and try to get hold of it in some way, or see the contents, and then let it go to whomsoever it may be addressed; and, knowing their plans, we shall allow them to meet and will net them all. What do you say to that, Monsieur Robert?"

"I say *oui, oui;* very good; that 's just my opinion. I must make up my quarrel with Catherine, so good night;" and he left Mathew, to return to the hotel.

The next morning he was about the hall, looking at every letter that was brought down by the servant to be posted. He managed to ascertain from the maids, by joking with them, for he was a favorite with them, if any one had come from Katy's mistress. No, there was

no letter sent down by Miss Hogg or her maid; he still watched and was rewarded by seeing Katy coming out of the hotel, and looking about as if expecting to see some of her friends to escort her; but there was no one but M. Robert to advance towards her; he came with a long face, looking heart-broken; but she tossed her head defiantly, and walked on, Robert following. After a great deal of trouble and many promises, he made his peace with her, and she told him that she was going to post a letter.

"But why not put it in the post-bag at the hotel?" he asked.

"Because my mistress wants to make sure that it is posted, for it is important."

"Aha," thought M. Robert, "we are coming to it; but I must see the address before she drops it in the post;" and he began to pretend to be jealous again, saying, "I don't believe your mistress wrote that letter; it is you writing to some fellow; now Catherine, *ma chérie,* that's not right, when I have told you how much I love you and want to marry you if you would let me."

Katy gave him a sly look, and said, "You are really insupportable with your jealousy, and I am wrong to encourage your curiosity. Here, look at the address of this letter."

M. Robert's heart leaped with joy at the prospect of seeing the address, for he felt sure that it was an answer to the one she had received the day previous. After teasing him a little while longer Katy allowed him to see her letter, and he read "Mrs. Hogg, No.— Clinton Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y., U. S. A." His disappointment was so great that he could not hide it.

"Well, I declare!" said Katy; "if you don't look disappointed because it is not addressed to a man;" and she laughed merrily.

"No, no;" said Robert; "it is the joy, the surprise, the happiness to see that you are true to me, *ma chérie.*"

"Strange way you Frenchmen have of showing your joy; and as for being true to you, I never promised any such thing. I don't know my mind yet; there's a nice young fellow at the post office who seemed quite taken with me yesterday, and as I haven't made up my mind whether I'll have you or not you must stay here outside

while I go in and buy a stamp;" and she left him at the door while she went in, and no sooner was she in than she tore and put in her pocket the envelope from her letter, and disclosed a second envelope addressed "Mr. Smith, 25 Rue Montmartre, Paris." There was a stamp on it, she dropped it in the post, and, returning to M. Robert, she walked back to the hotel.

"This is very slow work," thought M. Robert. "After all, perhaps the English detective was mistaken, and Miss Hogg had nothing to do with Lady Florence's disappearance." He had seen nothing so far, and he was getting tired of making love to Katy.

Two days passed away without anything worth recording. The third day a tall and fine looking footman was seen among the other servants with the exception of Katy, who had told Robert that she was afraid of him. He had tried a few jokes on her, but she had indignantly repulsed him. M. Robert thought he was a fine fellow, and made friends with him at once, though Katy told him not to do so and pouted over it. M. Robert and this new footman were often seen walking together. Katy was a great flirt and a great favorite among the servant men; she managed them so well that after a few days not one of them would go out walking with Thomas, as the new footman was called, though they talked to him in the house when Katy was not around. Only M. Robert defied Katy and continued going out with Thomas. The new footman seemed to like Robert; still, he had told him he would be sorry to be the cause of any misunderstanding between him and his sweetheart.

"O, that 's nothing," he replied; "she 'll come around in time; she has no cause to dislike you, so why should she?"

"I don't know," said Thomas; "I must try to make friends with her;" and he certainly did his best, but Katy would have none of him.

The reader will have guessed that this new footman was Jerry, and Katy's pretended dislike for him was to throw M. Robert off his guard and at the same time to set a spy on him, giving her more liberty. But how had she discovered that Robert was a detective? It remains for us to explain.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

JERRY was left alone in London to work his way to France the best way he could. He knew that every port would be watched as soon as the boy Jack was free and had related what had happened to him, and that he would recognize him should they meet. He had no fear of Walgrave nor Mathew, who had never seen him since he had shaved off his long beard; he knew that Miss Hogg would go openly, and that a detective would be sent after her who would have no trouble in finding her; he also knew that not finding Lady Florence with her they would guess that they had gone another way with her, and consequently would make it very difficult for him to leave England; so he set his wits to work and bought newspapers to see the departures of steamers that would take him to France by a roundabout way, and he concluded to go by train to Little Hampton, which is a very small town in England, and from there take passage to the Island of Jersey, and from there, in the steamer *Venus,* to Granville, France, and to go leisurely in order not to expose himself to suspicion. He knew that his mother and Lady Florence had left England before Jack had been discovered, and that so far, they were safe. He arrived safely in Jersey, and from there, in Granville, and after remaining a day in each of these towns, he had gone to Paris and had seen no suspicious person following him. He had taken a room at 25 Rue Montmartre, and had gone to post his letter at the general post office so as to leave no clew as to where or whom it came from. He apprised Miss Hogg of his whereabouts and awaited her orders, and the orders had come in the letter posted by Katy.

He was to come to the Hotel de Paris as the footman of an English gentleman who was to meet him there on his return from a visit that he was paying to one of his friends in the country, and to try to make friends with a certain footman who was supposed to be Katy's sweetheart, and who spoke English. Katy would pretend to dislike him

very much, however agreeable he might make himself to her. He was to watch this French footman without appearing to do so, and not to force his company on him, but to make himself so pleasant to all the men servants that he would attract the notice of the footman, and he would naturally make friends with him, as he was fond of a joke, and Jerry could be very funny when he chose, and Katy would drop the detective—for she had no doubt this man was a detective—and work so on the other men servants that they would turn the cold shoulder on Jerry, and so leave him more time to watch this man. He must make it his business to find out where he goes; if he meets Mathew; where Mathew is staying. When he had news worth communicating he could pass a note to Katy in one of his endeavors to make friends with her, for he must feel sorry that she disliked him; must declare himself quite fascinated by her good looks, and never lose a chance of making friends with her; but he must be careful and keep his wits about him, for they had to do with clever men—how many were after them she did n't know; but he was to trust no one but Katy, and, of course, pretend not to know Miss Hogg. This was, as near as possible, the substance of the letter posted by Katy.

But how had Miss Hogg discovered that Robert was a detective? When she had accepted him for her footman from his former master she had thought it strange that the master should have chosen her among so many other American ladies to offer her his footman. She had not thought much about it at the time, but it had come upon her when discussing the matter with her maid, in her own room. She was pleased to have a servant who could act as interpreter, but how came the gentleman to know that she did not speak French? He may have guessed it; still, she must keep her eyes open; the desire to outwit the French detectives as she had done the English ones came upon her, and she laughed merrily and made plans with Katy, who was getting quite used to the business and rather liked it; so she made up her mind to flirt with the French footman and find him out.

When Miss Hogg had seen Mathew sitting on a bench in the Champs Elysées and not far from him the gentleman who had recommended the footman who spoke English

—though he might have been there by mere chance—still, it flashed upon her, "He is a detective, and so is my footman. Bravo! my fine fellows, I have found you out and will lead you a fine dance!" and in her triumph, she had kissed the tips of her fingers to Mathew, as though to say, "There you are again; I know you;" but she took no notice of the gentleman, who imagined he had not been recognized by Miss Hogg, he having turned his head away as she passed, after telling Mathew that she was coming; but Miss Hogg had eyes like a hawk, and could see with half an eye, as the saying is.

She was exceedingly pleased when Katy brought her a letter from Jerry, for she needed him to watch her footman; Katy was getting tired of him. She had often gone out with him, but had seen nothing suspicious about him except that he liked to question her about her mistress, and had clearly shown his disappointment on seeing the letter addressed to Miss Hogg's mother. She knew that he went out every evening, but she had not dared to follow him, for if he found her out it would put him on his guard, and as Jerry was expected at any moment it was best to wait, for a man could follow where a woman could not, without being noticed. Miss Hogg impressed upon her very strongly not to be too friendly with Jerry —he must seem a stranger to her. She could pretend to dislike him, still, not too strongly, for that would make Robert suspicious, and that would end the fun.

Katy had played her part very cleverly by showing her displeasure at seeing Robert so taken up with the English footman, who, his master not being there, had all his time to himself, and was always ready to go out with whoever invited him till Katy had turned the other servants against him so that he seldom went out with anyone except Robert, though he had never forced his company on him; so he had no reason to suspect him of being in league with Miss Hogg, who never gave him a look, and Katy actually hated him, for, as she told Robert, "He takes all your time now; we can never go out for a walk since that big, ugly fellow came."

And Detective Robert, like all men, was a little vain, and believed Katy to be jealous, and he had answered her, "Well, *ma chérie,* you may come with us; why do you

hate the poor fellow? He is fine-looking; but perhaps you don't like tall men. I feel flattered, *mon ange,* and for the first time I rejoice at my short stature, since it has found favor in your eyes, *ma belle.*"

And Katy had turned away angrily and had gone upstairs to her mistress's room and had had a good laugh with her at his expense.

"Talk about women being vain, Mamie; why, men beat us all hollow."

"Well, never mind their vanity, Katy; now that we have Jerry to watch that jackanapes of a Frenchman we shall have more liberty to go about. I should like to see Mrs. Jerry—Martin, I mean. When the coast is clear you and I must go to see her. I dare not write, and it is much easier to talk than to write, and we can understand one another better. Everything must have gone right at Antwerp, for she arrived in Paris yesterday, her last note said, and is staying at her son's room, 25 Rue Montmartre. When Jerry goes out of an evening with Robert, and has found out where Mathew lives we must go. I must know first all about Mathew. Do you sometimes see him about the hotel—I mean disguised, of course."

"Not that I know of, Mamie; but you may depend upon it that he will turn up when we least expect him and spoil all."

"I often think so myself, for he is no fool."

"Nor is Robert," said Katy; "he can play the lover fine, the deceitful wretch; it is well that my heart is elastic or he would soon have it broken, were I to believe all his balderdash and his soft French words, which really sound very sweet, and his sweet smiles. I feel like boxing his ears, knowing that it is all sham. He has a fine mustache, so well curled and of such a nice brown; and such splendid blue eyes. If he were making love to me for good I would feel very differently towards him."

"I should think so, Katy; he 's a real gentleman; he can't hide that."

Some days later Jerry managed to pass a note to Katy, in which was Mathew's address, and the information that he often went out disguised as an old man, and went so far as to dine at the Paris Hotel at the *table d'hôte.* He had

told Robert, who went to report to him every night, and also that Miss Hogg had not recognized him; that he had played the gallant to her, passing her the dessert, and even helping her, and she had shown no sign of recognition.

When Miss Hogg read this she was furious, and she exclaimed, angrily, "The old porpoise! and I who believed him to be an old English lord, and actually pressed his hand as he passed me a plate of strawberries that he had prepared with port wine and sugar, he said, purposely for me. O, what a fool I am, to be sure! How he must laugh with that other devil of a Robert! But wait, I 'll be on the lookout for the old crank and I 'll pay him off."

"O, but that 's too good for anything," said Katy, laughing; "you, Mamie, making up to Mathew, and not knowing him! That beats all! Why, if you don't look out you 'll find yourself married to him before you know it."

"But read on, and see how Jerry learned all this; he 's a sharp fellow, that Jerry; I don't know what we would do without him."

"You 're right." And she read on: "When Robert visits Mathew he always takes me with him, that is, to the hotel, not to his room. He orders coffee; then, after drinking his cup, says, 'You amuse yourself here for half an hour; I have a *rendez-vous* upstairs. I would not tell you if you were friendly with Katy, but as you are not I can trust you not to tell her;' and off he goes, and I slip after him and listen at Mathew's door. The room is at the end of the hall on the fifth floor and no other rooms near it, so that no one has to pass the door, and not suspecting that anyone is listening at the door they talk at their ease and loud enough for me to hear. All I have to fear is should they come out unexpectedly I would have no time to retreat, for the hall is long. So far everything has gone right, and Robert does not suspect me in the least. When he comes down I am sometimes asleep in my chair or walking in front of the hotel. He begins to trust me, and has told me to have an eye on Katy and tell him where she goes. I laughed and said, 'Jealous, eh? Then I 'll have to be careful or you 'll be pitching into me some of these days if I pay her

a paltry compliment, and I really like Katy.' 'O, no, I won't be jealous of you; she don't care about tall men;' and he laughed and so did I, for I was taking him in, and not he me. We are going to Mathew at ten o'clock to-night; if you wish to go to my mother's I 'll keep an eye on both Robert and Mathew, so that you will not be interfered with, and will be warned if any danger is near."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

So things went on for a while. Miss Hogg often visited Mrs. Jerry and had her disguised at her house. Katy sometimes accompanied her mistress. Robert went as usual to Mathew every night, but he had nothing to report, and Mathew himself had not advanced a step in his case. All this was not very encouraging. Neither Jerry nor his mother had made their appearance in Paris. They could find no clew to Lady Florence. Robert sometimes set Thomas to watch Miss Hogg and her servant while he made his visits to Mathew, for he had heard that they went out together sometimes in his absence, and Jerry, or Thomas, as we may call him, would slip after Miss Hogg and Katy, and pretend to follow them for a few blocks; then, slipping a note in Miss Hogg's hand, would follow Robert and listen at Mathew's door. This was a dangerous business, for if he were caught, or even seen, in the hotel it would go hard with him and he would no longer be able to listen to all their conversation, not hearing the beginning.

Things were sure to turn out badly, and Miss Hogg, Jerry, and his mother were beginning to live in a fever of fear.

One evening Robert said, "Here, Thomas, is a note; take it up to the hotel, you know, go right up to the fifth story and at the end of the corridor you will see a door; knock twice, then open the door; if there is no one in, put the note under the door and come back here; but very likely you will find a gentleman there."

"Ah," said Thomas, "I thought it was a lady you went to see, and now you tell me it 's a gentleman; what am I to think of it?"

Robert laughed, though he felt very uneasy, for he was too wise to let Thomas know that, so he said, *Mon cher ami,* do me a favor and carry this note for me; then come back here and watch where Katy goes. I want to go to a little party; that is the reason that I write to my *bien-aimée,*

telling her that I can't come. The gentleman that you will see is her father. Now are you satisfied?"

"But why should I watch Katy since you love another?"

"Well, my sharp friend, I have not yet made up my mind; and then Katy treats me so badly that I doubt if she cares for me, and it is always well to have two strings to your bow. Ah, ha, *mon ami,* you may find it so one of these days."

Jerry had tried hard to warn Miss Hogg or Katy that afternoon, but Robert had stayed by him, never allowing him to leave his side for a moment; and, as ill luck would have it, Miss Hogg and Katy had gone out a few minutes before Robert had spoken about the note, and Jerry had noticed a middle-aged gentleman with a broad-brimmed hat, and looking quite the Frenchman, following them; yet to Jerry he was Mathew, but as Miss Hogg was only going shopping he had not troubled about him. Robert must have known him and he had made up his mind to do without Jerry that night.

Jerry was as clever as Robert, still he felt jammed in, but thought it best not to appear uneasy, nor did he try more than once to leave him; if Katy came back before he left he would manage to throw fear in his eyes as she passed him; she was cute, would scent danger and warn her mistress, and should she not return in time he must trust to her cleverness and that of her mistress; he could do nothing else; still, he was very anxious, for if Miss Hogg should be caught they would all be, for they were all in the same boat; yet he joked and laughed with Robert as though greatly enjoying his company.

Evening came and Jerry had to go with the note. Miss Hogg and her maid had not returned. Jerry dared not omit to carry the note, and he was also curious to see Mathew; but he promised himself that as soon as he had delivered the note he would hurry to the Rue Montmartre, watch for Miss Hogg's coming, and warn her at any risk to himself; if Robert should see him he could tell him that on his return from his errand he had seen Miss Hogg leave the hotel, and as he knew him, Robert, to be at a party, he had followed Miss Hogg and Katy, as he, Robert, had so often asked him to do. What could he say in reply to that? Nothing. So Jerry made his plans

going along to Mathew's hotel. Poor Jerry! He little knew that he was walking into a trap.

He arrived at the hotel, going upstairs as lightly as possible for he wanted to have a look at Mathew before he knocked; as he approached the door he could see a light under it, and he bent down to look through the keyhole, and nearly put his eye out with the key that had been left on the outside of the door. With great fortitude he suppressed a cry of pain, and withdrawing the key from the lock, he slipped it into his pocket, thinking it might be useful in the future, and he would give it to Miss Hogg.

He looked through the keyhole and saw Mathew sitting quietly in an armchair, smiling to himself, as if waiting for some one. "O," thought Jerry, "I 'm expected; it 's a plan between the two; I must be on my guard," and retreating to the end of the passage, he came back with a heavy step so as to be heard by Mathew; and giving two raps, he opened the door, and found Mathew just putting on his hat as if he were going out; he was disguised as an old gentleman; probably the same who had been so attentive to Miss Hogg at the dinner table in the Hotel de Paris.

"O," he said, turning round and facing Jerry, "it 's you, Thomas; I thought it was Robert."

"O, no, sir; Robert can't come, and I bring a note explaining why."

Mathew opened the note, saying, "Wait, my friend, I may want to send an answer; sit down;" and Jerry sat down very near the door, feeling very anxious about what was in the note, as he saw Mathew smile to himself as if well pleased; and having read the note, he put it in his pocket, saying, "So our friend has gone to a party, but he will be here by eleven o'clock, and he proposes that we have supper together, so that you are to stay here and wait for him. I will do all I can to entertain you in the meantime. I 'm sorry to say that my daughter is out or she would be able to amuse you better than I, for she plays the piano and sings well."

"O, don't trouble at all about me," said Jerry, "I 'll go for a walk and come back at eleven o'clock; you were

going out, I believe, so don't let me stand in your way, Mr. Johnson." That had been the name on the note.

"Well, you're right, Thomas, I was going out when you came in, but since you don't mind I'll go now;" and Jerry rejoiced that he had succeeded so well in throwing Mathew off his guard, and certainly did not intend to return at eleven o'clock; he only hoped that he would be in time to warn Miss Hogg of what was going on.

"Well, good evening, Mr. Johnson, I'll be back soon."

"Wait a moment," said Mathew, "I'll go a little ways with you;" and, closing the door, he felt for the key to lock it, but not finding it, he went in again and got a light to look for it, feeling sure that it had fallen on the floor.

Jerry took good care not to offer his services in the search for the key, so that he could not be accused of having taken it; but the search proved vain.

"Well, never mind," said Mathew, "I have nothing worth stealing, so let's go;" and they went out together.

Mathew had really no business to attend to; he only went out for a walk, as he said it gave him an appetite; after walking about the boulevard and smoking their cigars, they returned to the hotel, where Robert had not yet arrived; so Mathew ordered supper, and as at eleven o'clock Robert had not shown up, Mathew said, "Indeed, we are not going to have a good supper spoiled by waiting for Robert, so let us fall to, my friend." Jerry was compelled to be pleased at the attention shown him by Mr. Johnson, and he forced himself to eat, wondering when Johnson would let him go. He felt sure that something dreadful was taking place; and when, at half past twelve, Mr. Johnson, having given up all hopes of Robert, wished him good night and allowed him to depart, he did not know whether he ought to go straight to the hotel or to his mother; if they had been found out it would be equally dangerous at either place. His thoughts were running sixty miles a minute, and he had the fever of fear; he was not a coward, but he hated to be working in the dark.

O, if he only knew what Robert had been doing during his absence he could shape his course accordingly! He was not returning to the hotel the usual way, but by a

roundabout way, deliberating with himself as to what had better be done, when he saw a man approaching at a brisk pace, stop still a moment, then hurriedly retrace his steps. "Why," thought Jerry, "that 's Robert, but I hope to throw him off his guard first;" and he walked on toward the hotel, smiling to himself as if he had had a drink too many, and pretending not to see Robert hiding in a doorway, who, as soon as Jerry had turned the corner, took to his heels and ran till he had turned the other corner.

Jerry having seen this pantomime, went towards Mathew's hotel by another route, and got there just in time to see him meet Robert at the door and go into the hotel with him. The hotel was still open, though it must have been one o'clock in the morning. Jerry slipped in by the side door and crept upstairs in the dark, for all the lights had been extinguished except in the barroom. He listened as he went up, for fear of overtaking them on the hall stairs, but there was no danger of that for Robert was in a hurry to unburden himself of the great discovery he had made that evening; and when Jerry reached the door he was saying, "Yes, my friend, I have discovered where Lady Florence is hidden by Miss Hogg; what do you think of that, *mon ami?*"

"Good, very good, eh?"

It made Jerry's hair stand on end; they were discovered, and probably Miss Hogg, Katy, and his mother were taken prisoners; the perspiration ran down his face; his turn would come next. But Mathew was speaking:

"Do sit down, Monsieur Robert, and tell me, did you arrest anyone?"

"No, no, Monsieur Mathew; there 's no hurry."

These words relieved poor Jerry of a great weight; all was not lost, and they might yet turn the tables on the detectives. He must hear what Robert has to say, and what their plans are; he will have to see Miss Hogg that very night; she must be told. Robert is talking:

"Well, you see, Monsieur Mathew, I sent Thomas to you because I wanted him out of the way so that I might be free to follow Miss Hogg should she go out. I pretended to be going to a party, but in reality I hid in a large press in Miss Hogg's room."

"But if she had discovered you, what then?"

"O, I had to chance that; I would have said that Katy put me there;" and he laughed.

"Well, that would be too bad," replied Mathew.

"Well, I was not discovered, so that 's all right. Miss Hogg came in first and Katy followed in about five minutes. She said, 'Robert has gone to a party, and I can't find Thomas.' "

Poor Jerry, who was listening, felt his hair stand up on his head and his face turn white, for he had expected Katy to say Jerry, but thank heaven, she had said Thomas; he was not found out yet.

"Miss Hogg answered, 'O, don't trouble about him; he can't be far from Robert; if there was danger he would manage to let us know; never fear; he is a match for that plausible Robert; but we had better go; give me my heavy coat for it will be cold coming back.' I feared that she was coming to the press for it; if she did it would be all up with me; but no, it was hanging behind the door. After muffling themselves up they left the room, and so did I. I had disguised myself so as to be able to follow near enough not to lose sight of them in the dark. It was a good, long walk, wherever they were going. At last they went in at No. 25 Rue Montmartre."

"O," thought Jerry, "they have us this time! I wonder that Miss Hogg and Katy were so careless before entering the house, but, of course, they depended upon me to see that the coast was clear, and I had told them that it was."

"Well, Monsieur Robert, what did you find out?" asked Mathew, impatiently.

"Wait, wait, Mr. Mathew; it 's too good to be swallowed at one gulp; you shall have it all, bit by bit, and enjoy it the better for it, too. Just as you sip a good glass of wine. Well, *mon ami,* I got into the house almost as soon as they did, for I did n't know to what floor they were going, and when once in the room, how could I tell, so that I must not lose sight of them, and of course I remained one flight behind. When I had arrived at the third floor a door opened at the fourth floor, and an old woman, decidedly English, looked over the balustrade with a lighted candle as if she was expecting them. When they came up to her she said, 'Who have you with you—

who is that coming up after you?' 'No one,' answered Katy. 'O, yes,' said the old woman, but I did n't give her time to come down and see. I opened a door near where I had been standing, and walked in, to the amazement of the occupants of the room; and acting as though I thought I had made a mistake, I retreated, saying, *'Mille pardons, je me trompe;'* and I ran downstairs whistling an opera tune, waited some time in the hall and then went up again. The old woman was no longer there; it was dark; she must have taken me for one of the tenants, as I wished her to do. As there was no one on the watch, I crept upstairs with only one mishap—I thought I had reached the top, and as I had not done so, my foot came down with a thump that shook me all over."

"O, do come to the point," said Mathew; "I don't want to know how you got in, but what you heard; we are losing time, and they will get away from us again."

"No, no, Mr. Mathew, I promise you on my honor they won't escape, and if they do, I know where Lady Florence is, and that is the most important thing, is it not?"

"Yes, yes; well go on; I am in a fever of expectation."

"Well, *mon ami,* after that mishap I waited for some time for a door to open; but no; either they had not heard or they did n't care who might be breaking his neck on the dark stairs, so I stole softly up to the door, and looking through the keyhole, I saw Miss Hogg seated comfortably by the fire, without her cloak, and an old woman giving her a cup of either tea or coffee. Katy was placing the cloak on the bed, for it was a bedroom and living-room combined. Miss Hogg, after drinking the contents of the cup, said, 'Well, nurse, we shall have to move on soon; we are being watched too closely for comfort, and after having gone so far successfully it would be too bad to be overtaken by those detectives. I think we have had fun enough at their expense, and that it would be tempting Providence to continue longer. Robert and Mathew will eventually prove too much for us.'

"So you see, Mr. Mathew, she knew that I was a detective; and you may depend upon it that that long-legged fellow, Thomas, has been sent by her to watch me; and I who trusted him and set him to watch Katy. How they must have laughed at me!"

"Hold on," said Mathew, placing his hand on his forehead, "I have it. This fellow Thomas is Jerry the poacher, and the old woman at 25 Rue Montmartre is his mother, as sure as I live. I never saw the fellow while in England, so of course I would n't know him; and as he was not in Miss Hogg's service I never thought of his being Jerry."

"*Oui, oui,* Monsieur Mathew, that 's it; now we are getting things straight at last. That Miss Hogg would be worth her weight in gold to the detective bureau. How clever! And that Catherine is worthy of her, the deceitful cat! All my love-making has been lost on her; she has a marble heart, the little coquette!"

"Well, about Lady Florence," asked Mathew again; "are you never coming to that?"

"*Oui, mon ami;* I am just on the point of letting the cat out of the bag, as you English say. 'You 're right, Miss Hogg,' replied the old woman; 'I live in fear, and don't dare call my soul my own; I do wish I could live in peace once more, were I ever so poor; and I have been very sorry that I have had a hand in this affair. Do, miss, return the young lady; they will forgive you for the pleasure of getting her back again.' 'No, nurse, never; they have insulted me beyond pardon, and if I can prevent it they shall never see her again.' 'Then you intend to leave her at the *Couvent des Ursulines,* where I placed her?' 'Yes, they will never think of looking for her there; as I have never set foot in Antwerp in all my travels they can't suspect that she 's there.' 'No,' said Katy, 'but do you think it prudent to speak of that here? Suppose some one heard you; how long would she remain there and what would become of us, I should like to know? Why mention names of places,' continued prudent Katy. 'Katy is right;' said Miss Hogg; 'let us never name the place where she is.' I thought, 'Aha, Miss Hogg, it is rather late to shut the stable door after the horse is gone; you will find that out to your cost, *ma mie.*' "

"You 're right, Monsieur Robert, but what do you propose to do—arrest them all, and go for Lady Florence?"

"No, no, not that, Mr. Mathew; we have really no proof against these people until we have secured Lady Florence,

so that our first move must be to get a letter of introduction to the captain of police of Antwerp, Belgium. We French detectives have no power to act there without an order from the captain there.

"I will get you the order to-morrow, and you can leave Paris to-morrow night; or do you wish me to go with you? I really think that it would be better for me to stay here and watch."

CHAPTER XL.

JERRY had been on the point of giving up his rôle of listener at the door since he had heard that all was discovered; still, he waited to hear whether Robert intended to stay in Paris, and Mathew's answer would decide that; he listened eagerly and full of fear. Mathew thought a moment, then said,"I know that it would be wiser to leave you here to watch; still, I can't make up my mind to go alone. I don't speak French, and will not always be able to find an interpreter when I need one; then again, I want to go secretly, for we don't know what accomplice they may have on the watch, for Miss Hogg has plenty of money, and will not spare it to save herself from scandal. So you pretend to-morrow that you are ill; it will appear quite possible after your party of to-night; then, to-morrow night be here at eight o'clock with the captain's letter; or, should you get it sooner, come here. If I should not be in, leave it on my table with a note, telling me at what time to expect you. And, above all, should you meet Jerry, don't let him see that you suspect him, for I want to grab them all when we come back."

Jerry, having heard all he wanted to know, thought it high time to be gone. Robert would soon leave Mathew, and he must not be seen by him, so he left the house and hurried to the hotel, entered by the servants' door, went to his room, and wrote the following note: "Katy, I must see Miss Hogg at once. All is discovered; be quick. I am outside of your door waiting." Going to Katy's door, he slipped the note under it, and whispered through the keyhole, "Katy, Katy."

Poor Katy woke with a start and began to tremble, for she thought that some one was in the room; but hearing again, "Katy, Katy," she knew that it was at the door, and guessed that it was Jerry and that there was great danger ahead. She jumped out of bed and whispered, "Is that you, Thomas?"

"Yes, yes, read the note under the door quick."

She picked up the note, and running into her mistress's room, which adjoined hers, and where there was a light, she read the note; then, going to Miss Hogg, she shook her, saying in a trembling voice, "Mamie, we 're lost; everything is found out; Jerry 's outside my door and wants to speak to you. O, what are you going to do Mamie?"

Miss Hogg jumped up like a flash of lightning and exclaimed, "What! did you say the detectives are at the door?"

"No, Mamie, it is Jerry who wants to speak to you."

"Well, let him into your room; don't leave him outside; he 'll be seen."

"But Mamie, I 'm not dressed."

"Well, bring your clothes in here; unlock your door and tell him to come in; I 'll be with him in a jiffy. This is no time to shilly-shally; do as I tell you in the twinkling of a bedpost."

"But, Mamie, what will he think?"

"Think, indeed! He is thinking more of getting away than of you or your clothes, so do as I tell you."

Katy, going back to her room, took the clothes in her arms, unlocked the door, and rushed into Miss Hogg's room, banging the door after her in a great hurry.

Jerry understood that he was to come in; so he opened the door and entered Katy's room, locking the door after him. The room was dark except for the streak of light that could be seen under Miss Hogg's door. Jerry had not long to wait, however, for Miss Hogg soon appeared in a flannel dressing gown. She really looked grand; her face was flushed and she had a look of determination in her eyes that said plainly that if everything was not lost she would show fight to the last, and fiercely too; she looked more like a general rallying his soldiers for a final and deadly fight against the enemy than a young girl found out in a trick of petty revenge against her lover. Jerry's courage returned as he looked at her and thought what a brave soldier she would make. He felt proud of her and resolved to help her to the last.

"Well, Jerry, are they coming here? If so you had better decamp and warn your mother. You have done your

best; you could n't do more. Here is something; save yourself, if possible."

"No, miss; they 're not coming yet; don't excite yourself. You may save us all yet; let me tell you what has happened;" and he related all that the reader knows.

Miss Hogg listened, and when she had heard all she smiled, saying, "Cheer up, Jerry, all is not lost; they dare not arrest us without proof; we must not let them get these proofs."

Katy also had heard with fear and trembling all that Jerry had said, for she had entered the room after dressing, bringing a light with her; but she felt reassured when she heard Miss Hogg speak with so much confidence.

"No," repeated Miss Hogg, "they must not find proof, and they won't either; we must be beforehand with them. To-morrow Robert will not be on the watch since he is to play sick and has to go for the letter. Now, Jerry, I must have that letter. You must disguise yourself so that he won't know you; then follow him and manage to get me the letter. You have Mathew's key?"

"No, miss, you have it."

"True; here it is; take it; and should Robert leave the letter on Mathew's table it will be easy for you to get it, but in any case I must have it, if you have to knock him down to get it; but whatever you do, don't let him know that you 're after the letter or he will suspect us. I leave this matter to you, knowing that you will find some way with as little danger to us as possible. Be careful, and remember that I can't do anything without this letter, and that with it we are saved. Now go and rest; it 's after five o'clock. If you should have anything to say to me slip a note under Katy's door, but not such a one as you did to-night; it must be a love letter; do you understand? a meeting somewhere. Now you may go. Katy, see if the coast is clear."

Jerry left the room, feeling that he bore on his shoulders a great responsibility. How was he to get that letter, and what good would it be to anyone? True, it might delay Mathew's departure by one day at most, but that would not give Miss Hogg time to remove Lady Florence and hide her in a safer place, for Mathew and Robert were not such idiots as not to have telegraphed to

the Mother Superior at Antwerp not to deliver the child to anyone but them (the detectives), and certainly Miss Hogg was exposing him unnecessarily to danger; still, he would obey her orders; but as to knocking Robert down, he would think twice about it; they were very severe in France to those who interfered with the police.

The next morning he saw Robert, who said, "I feel very badly to-day, I don't think going to parties agrees with me."

"But you are going out," replied Jerry; "shall I go with you?"

"No, Thomas; no, my friend; I am only going to the druggist's around the corner."

"Well," said Jerry, "I 'm sorry; but since I can't do anything for you I shall go for a long walk by myself."

"All right; *très bien.* I 'll see you to-night or to-morrow morning," said Robert, as he left Jerry, who, instead of going out, went in again, and soon reappeared disguised as an old man with long, gray beard, shabby coat and broad-brimmed hat, form rather bent, and carrying a stick to support himself. He walked about for over an hour and then went in the direction of Mathew's hotel, and entering a coffee shop opposite the hotel ordered food; he sat at a table facing the hotel to watch for Robert, and wondered how he was going to manage to get the letter. He knew that he would fail; how could it be otherwise? Even if he were to knock Robert down he would be heard; people would run up and he would have no time to search for the letter and get away. And then supposing that Mathew had stayed at home—how could he manage both of them? No, he could not, for this was not a matter of strength but of *finesse.* Poor Jerry could form no plan that was at all feasible. After half an hour's watching he saw Mathew standing on the doorstep of his hotel, looking up and down as if tired of waiting; he walked a short distance, came back, and seemed about to go in; changed his mind, came out again, looked about once more, and walked briskly away, turning the corner.

Jerry waited to see if he would come back; no, five minutes elapsed; then Jerry rose from the table, paid the waiter, left the *café,* walked down a short distance, crossed, retraced his steps, entered the hotel, and seeing no one

about, hurried upstairs full speed, not at all like an old man, as his appearance would indicate; and taking a key from his coat pocket he opened Mathew's door, not without fear, for he would be terribly punished if caught at it, but he saw no other way. Having entered the room he relocked the door and looked for a hiding place. There was a clothespress, but probably Mathew's clothes were in there. Under the bed? No, that would not do. They were not likely to look there, not suspecting anyone of being in the room but themselves; still, should he be discovered he could not get out of it fast enough to defend himself.

In one corner was a very large trunk such as traveling clerks use for carrying their goods; if it were empty that would do, supposing it to be unlocked; he tried it, and, O, joy! it was unlocked and empty, so he got in, jamming the end of his stick between the lid and the box to give him air; no one would notice it and in an instant he could throw back the lid and be in a position to defend himself if need be, for he must not be taken, whatever happened; and thus thinking, he waited, not feeling very comfortable in his hiding place, yet fearing to leave it, for should Mathew return, or Robert come with the letter, he would have no time to retreat to his box; so he kept as still as possible, for he felt the need of turning from side to side; he was cramped up, and he said to himself, "If I 'm found out I shall cut a poor figure if I have to fight Mathew, who is a match for me at my best. I almost wish I had hidden under the bed. I think I 'll get out and creep over there."

He raised the lid of the trunk and had one leg out when he heard hurried footsteps, then the key turning in the lock. He let himself fall back in the box in a heap, and with such a thump that it was a wonder that whoever was unlocking the door did n't hear him, for he gave a groan as he sat on a horseshoe with the nails turned upward, which must have been put there by the owner of the trunk for good luck, but it certainly turned out to be very bad luck for poor Jerry, for, situated as he was, he could not remove it, as the nails stuck in the cloth of his unmentionables and hurt him, as they had found their way beyond the cloth; this, with the fear that he

might have been heard by the party entering the room, did not render his position enviable. Still, he had learned that however bad things might be it is possible for them to be worse, for his mind was greatly relieved when he heard Robert call out as he entered the room, "Well, *mon ami,* I have the letter, and we can start as once." Evidently he had not heard the noise made by Jerry, and seeing that there was no one there, he continued, "Well, I might have known that Mathew was out for I had to use my key. Why did n't he wait for me? Ah, here he comes!"

And Mathew came in quite out of breath, saying, "Monsieur Robert, why did n't you stop when I called you just now? I actually ran to reach you, for there was a train about to leave that would have taken us to Antwerp; and now we shall have to wait until nine o'clock to-night."

"O, how could I know that you were behind me when I thought you at home waiting for me? You saw that I was making all haste since you were unable to catch up with me. However, here is the letter;" and he flourished it above his head, dancing a *pas seul* to his own music.

He was in high glee. "Ah, *mon ami,* we have Miss Hogg this time. But what queer names those Americans have! Just think how it would sound in French—*Mademoiselle Cochon!*" And he made a face that made Mathew laugh and say:

"Well, there are certainly very strange names in America, and for this reason: the people go there from all countries and intermarry, and the strange sounding names so hard to pronounce, get mispronounced, and even misspelled by their owners, on the wife's side, of course, till the name would not be recognized by their ancestors. Most likely Miss Hogg's name was Hod or Hodson some years ago, and has changed little by little to Hogg; or it may have been given as a joke, which has been kept up till they became so accustomed to it that it no longer sounds horrible to them. I, myself, have so often said Miss Hogg, and have heard the name so frequently lately, that it no longer has any meaning to me; and so it is with everything when it is often heard."

Poor Jerry during this talk was suffering such pain that he wished the talkers might both be turned into hogs and he would make short work of them and relieve himself

of the horseshoe that was fastening its nails more and more securely in his flesh. The hope of getting the letter would have helped him to bear his sufferings, but that hope had fled; and if they were going to remain in the room until time for their departure he would have to show himself, for if his life depended upon it he could not have stayed in that box for more than eight hours. O, why had he not gotten under the bed? He might, even now, have gone to sleep there; while here, in addition to being cramped up, which was quite bad enough, he had to put up with the horseshoe, which stuck to him like a limpet to a rock. Beads of perspiration ran down his face; the pain was insufferable; he must move just a little to prevent that big long nail from going any deeper; so he tried to turn very gently; he was succeeding, and felt so much relieved that he turned a little faster, hoping to disengage the nails entirely, when down came the lid of the box with a bang! He had moved the stick that opened the lid to give him air. Poor Jerry nearly fainted with fear and lack of air. How he wished he had allowed the nails to go right through him, for now he was surely discovered, and he had no chance of getting away, not the slightest; they were two to one against him who could not have used his limbs even to walk across the room. He, Miss Hogg, his mother, and Katy would all be taken.

Strange, that at a moment fraught with such danger to himself, he should have thought so kindly of Katy; he felt that the loss of her to him was more than the loss of his liberty. Yes, shut up in that traveling box, amid so many dangers, he discovered that he loved Katy. It is truly said that love laughs at locksmiths.

Many of my readers may say, "How absurd for a man in Jerry's situation to be thinking more of love than of saving himself!" Wrong, my friends; it has often been the case, even in greater difficulties than Jerry found himself to be in; for love has come to many in sinking ships; and young men and women who had never owned that they loved one another have sunk in the cruel sea clasped in each other's arms, and have died happy at the thought of not being divided. Such is true and holy love; it reveals itself in the moment of greatest danger, not at balls and parties. That is not the same love.

CHAPTER XLI.

JERRY'S heart beat with honest love for Katy—happiness mixed with sorrow because he was not free, and he knew that there was no escape for him. All these thoughts passed through his mind in a few seconds as he waited for Mathew or Robert to come and ascertain the cause of the noise. He had heard Mathew say, "What 's that—did you hear that noise like the shutting of a door or a window? It sounded as though it might be in this room—somewhere in that dark corner where the press throws a shadow."

"It sounded to me as though it might be in the corridor," replied Robert; "perhaps there 's some one at the door listening." He walked to the door, opened it and looked into the hallway. "I don't see anyone, but of course there has been time to run away; perhaps whoever it was bumped his head against the door. I wonder who it could have been!"

"I tell you that the sound was in the room," said Mathew; and he began to search under the bed, going first to the press, then looking under the bed, and finally going to the big box said, "I wonder if this large trunk is locked; I have never had the curiosity to try."

Jerry had heard him coming, and, mad with fear, he grasped the lid of the box inside with all his strength, his nails breaking with the effort, but it was his only chance, so he held on for dear life as he felt Mathew trying to lift the lid, which resisted his efforts and so convinced him that it was locked, to the great joy of Jerry, who was beginning to hope that he might yet escape discovery.

"It 's locked," said Mathew.

"Of course," replied Robert; "and probably full of goods—perhaps gold, *mon ami.*" And going to the box himself, to the horror of Jerry, he took hold of it by the handle and stood it up on end and had Jerry standing on his head in no time; yet Jerry never let go his grip, though he expected it would fly open should Robert take it into his head to turn it bottom upward.

"Ma foi!" said Robert, "it is heavy enough to be gold."

"What are you up to?" said Mathew, coming in from the hall where he had gone for the moment. "Do you know that there may be breakable goods in that trunk, and by turning it on end you may be doing great damage? Put it back in its place, and since we have some hours to spare we will go down to dinner; then we can go to the Boulevard and take a smoke."

"Yes, you 're right;" replied Robert, letting the box fall back in its place with a bang; "I never thought of anything breaking in this trunk or I would n't have touched it. Let 's put that letter in a safe place."

"Yes," said the other, "I 'll put it in the pocket of my traveling overcoat;" and to Jerry's great joy they both left the room, locking the door after them.

Jerry lifted the lid of his box just a little to get some much needed air, then waited a little while, fearing that they might return for something; he waited five minutes, during which time he undid the horseshoe from where it had stuck so fast, and he certainly felt the better for it; then, getting out of the trunk with great difficulty, he did his best to stand; his back ached and his neck pained him; it was a wonder that it had not been broken when Robert had stood the box on its end; still, he exerted himself with all his might; he was as pale as a ghost. He saw a bottle on the table, hurried towards it, and swallowing some of its contents, which proved to be brandy, felt revived.

Now for the letter! Where was the coat? Surely Mathew had not taken it with him—and a chill of fear ran down his back; it was neither on the bed nor behind the door. Poor Jerry looked the picture of despair; he had felt sure that he would capture the letter, and his disappointment was great indeed, when he felt something thick and soft under his feet. O joy! it was the coat, which must have fallen from the nail when Mathew had closed the door. He felt for the letter; yes, there it was, and he made sure that it was the right one by looking at the address; he could read enough to see that it was addressed to some police at Antwerp, and putting it in his inside coat pocket, he replaced the coat on the nail, opened the door, and, seeing no one about, he locked the door, hurried down the stairs, and as he passed the glass door

saw Mathew and Robert enjoying their dinner and looking the picture of content.

Jerry jumped into a passing cab and was driven to the hotel. He hurried upstairs, knocked at Katy's door, and, for the first time looked shy when she opened it. She had been very anxiously expecting him, and as he looked downcast she said, "You have not succeeded, have you, Jerry?"

"Yes, Katy, here 's the letter."

Katy caught his arm and pulled him into the room, locked the door, and, taking the letter he held towards her, said, "Wait here. You 're a clever man, Jerry, but you look tired and pale;" and she left him, to go to Miss Hogg, who was resting in her own room, recruiting her strength for the coming work. She had told Katy to arouse her should Jerry come, either with or without the letter.

When Katy came calling, "Mamie, Mamie, here 's the letter, and Jerry is in my room," Miss Hogg's face beamed with joy, and rising from the couch she said, "Now we are safe if we only act quickly." On seeing Jerry she gave a start, fearing that she had been betrayed, for she had forgotten that he was disguised, and his make-up was so good that it would have deceived his own mother; but, recovering herself, she said, smiling, "You really gave me a fright; you reminded me of Walgrave. Now listen to my plan. Wait; I 'll read this letter first."

The envelope in which the letter was had not been closed, in order, probably, to allow Mathew to read the contents of the letter. Miss Hogg read it to herself, went back into her room, erased the name of Mathew and wrote in its stead "Walgrave," with a very good imitation of the handwriting; to unsuspecting people it would look the same—perhaps a trifle more inky—but in the writing of a name that is often observable, if the writer is doubtful as to the spelling of it. She then returned to Jerry.

"What time does the train leave?"

"Nine, I heard them say."

"Yes, but they will be going themselves by that train unless they discover that the letter has disappeared; then they will have to apply to the detective office for another, and that will occasion some delay; but they will suspect me of having something to do with its disappearance, for it

would benefit no one but me, and I don't want them to implicate me; I want to come out of this affair with flying colors, to turn the tables completely upon them, and to be free to come and go wherever I feel inclined. I can't hide; that 's out of the question; and the two detectives and I must not be going on the same train and get there at the same time; so there 's a hitch here that I had not foreseen. They may not even miss the letter before reaching Antwerp, and should we meet there they will have the best of me, there 's no doubt about that."

"But, Mamie," said Katy, "is there no other way of reaching Antwerp than by this train?"

"There may be; but I should be too late. Look here, Jerry, get me a time table of the trains and steamers quick; we have no time to lose; it is two o'clock already."

Jerry went out and soon returned with the time table. Miss Hogg ran her eye over it, and said that at four o'clock the steamer *Eugénie* would leave for Havre de Grace. Now, it is only three hours from Paris to Havre de Grace; if perchance there was a steamer that left Havre during the night for Antwerp they would be there very early in the morning—as early as if they went by the nine o'clock train—and no one would think of looking for her on that line. She took up the newspaper and ran her eye down the column of French steamers from Havre to other ports. Yes, there was one at midnight going to Antwerp; that would do. But there was still another obstacle to be removed, and that the worst of all; by going to Antwerp by way of Havre she would leave no clew behind, but she was in danger of meeting Mathew and Robert there; she could not get there very much sooner than they could, and she would not have time to remove Lady Florence before their arrival.

"There 's only one way," said Jerry; "I must manage somehow to make them miss their train so as to give you time to act without too much hurry, which would look suspicious to the Antwerp police, and spoil all."

"If you can manage that, Jerry, all will be well."

"All right, Miss Hogg, go on with your plan, for of course you have one, though I can't see it. Don't trouble in the least about Mathew and Robert; they won't get to Antwerp before to-morrow night."

"Will that give me time to remove the child, and you to get to a place of safety?"

"Yes, plenty."

"Now, you leave us and attend to Mathew and Robert, and don't let anyone know that I have left the hotel."

"Is Katy going?"

"No; she will tell you my plans when you have delayed those two fellows. I 'm going to take your mother with me. Now, Katy, see that the coast is clear, and when you have seen Jerry out safely come back to me."

Miss Hogg and her maid soon left the hotel, and, taking a cab, were driven straight to No. 25 Rue Montmartre. The detectives were not likely to follow; they knew the place, and were so sure that they had their game that they would not have troubled to go after her had they seen her; for, of course they were not aware that she knew they had found out where Lady Florence was. Had they suspected that they had had a listener at Mathew's door it would have altered the case, and they would have been in hot pursuit of her, for they knew she was clever, and they feared her; but they believed her to be in total ignorance of their discovery, and they expected to get Lady Florence into their own hands before she had wind of what they were doing; so that the coast was clear for Miss Hogg, and Mathew and Robert, instead of being employed in watching her movements, were having a good time over their dinner, laughing and joking at the clever trick they were playing a certain dark-skinned young lady with a queer name.

"Ah, *mon cher,* we have her at last! What do you think she 'll say when we tell her that we have the young lady—will she faint, will she knock us down, or will she beg for mercy?"

"I can't exactly tell you what Miss Hogg will do," replied Mathew; "but there is one thing that I am perfectly sure she will not do, and that is faint away, whatever the news we bring; and also that we shall have the length of her tongue; not that she has ever used it against me, but Walgrave has told me that he had been staggered by it; she actually pulled off his false beard, exposed him in a hotel in London, and declared him to be a blackmailer;

and he was almost kicked out by the owner, who took Miss Hogg's part."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Robert; "but she's a brave demoiselle, and I long to see how she will behave. I think I'll keep in the background, *mon ami,* behind you, and let you receive the first shots. I'll have quite enough of the second volley; and besides I shall have that little vixen Katy, who is quite capable of scratching my eyes out; and I care very much for my eyes, though they have not served me very much, even doing my best. The little coquette must have a heart of stone."

"My dear Monsieur Robert, I wish with all my heart that this affair was over; it's hard to say what tricks she will play us yet. You are sure that no one saw you at 25 Rue Montmartre?"

"Quite sure, *mon ami;* if I had been seen they would have made a move by this time, and they haven't done so. I met Thomas this morning; he wanted to go out with me, but I told him that I was ill, and was only going to the druggist's, so that he thinks I am in the hotel, and Miss Hogg is not likely to send for me, believing me to be ill. I shall show myself at the hotel shortly before my departure and see how matters are working, and then slip out and join you at the station. What do you say to that plan —will it suit you, Monsieur Mathew?"

"Yes. It will be best for us not to be seen too much together. I'll meet you at the station at a quarter to nine. Now let us go to the Boulevard and smoke a cigar."

After walking and smoking for some time they parted, Mathew returning to his rooms, and Robert hurrying through a by-street to the hotel, on entering which he met Thomas, who accosted him, saying, "O, Robert, I'm glad you're better. Are you going out or just coming in?"

"I was just going out," replied Robert; "I have been sitting all day, and I feel stiff; but I forgot my handkerchief in my room and was just going back for it when I met you."

"Well, all right," said Thomas; "I'll wait for you outside, and we can go out together, since you are so well again."

"Very well, my friend, I 'll be with you in a minute. Where 's Katy, *ma bien-aimée,* have you seen her?"

"Yes; she 's upstairs with her mistress; shall I call her?"

"No, no," said Robert, who thought he had quite enough to do to get rid of Thomas without having Katy added, who might insist on going out with them; "no, no; don't disturb her; I 'm not well enough to go far, and she does n't like you, so leave her with Miss Hogg;" and he hurried to his room, intending to stay there a while, and if Thomas came in quest of him he would tell him he felt worse and wished to be alone; then he would slip out disguised and join Mathew. So he entered his room, and was quite surprised to see a beautiful bouquet of flowers on his dressing table. "Aha, this must be the work of Katy, or perhaps of one of the other maidservants. If it is Katy, she must like me, poor girl, and she has not a heart of stone, as I have said. That 's the worst of being good looking—you can't look at a girl but she must fall in love with you. How sweet these flowers are!" and he buried his nose in them. "O, my sweet Katy, if these are your flowers—always supposing that they are—I must say that it was nice of you, *ma belle,* and I prefer their presence to yours. Ah, ha, ha!" and he inhaled their perfume with delight, and drawing up an armchair to his dressing table, he sat down, took the bouquet in his hands, enjoyed its perfume to his heart's content, ever and anon looking at his handsome face in the glass, and saying to himself that it was no wonder that women favored him, and he laughed, well pleased with himself. Then he remained silent. I suppose his thoughts were too pleasant for words. Then he closed his eyes, probably to recall some pretty girls who, in his vanity, he supposed were breaking their hearts for him—perhaps Katy.

If he had invoked Katy's spirit it had answered, for the door opened and she peeped in, drew back, and soon returned, not alone, but with Jerry, carrying an armful of clothes. What could it mean? Katy actually walked up to Robert and looked him straight in the face, yet Robert did not move; his eyes remained closed and he still held fast to the bouquet with both hands.

Jerry having placed the clothes on the bed, also took

a look at Robert, and shook him, but Robert did not move; he was fast asleep. "He 'll do," whispered Jerry; "take those flowers away, and mind you destroy them; then bring me those three bottles of brandy and wine—one full, one half full, and one empty. Hurry."

Katy went off with the flowers under her apron, and Jerry busied himself with the clothes he had brought with him, which proved to be a large traveling overcoat and a large woolen scarf. After putting these garments in order on the bed, he met Katy at the door; she had the bottles and glasses; he arranged them on a small side table, undid a pack of cards and scattered them among the bottles and glasses, then rolled the armchair in which Robert was sitting fast asleep, near the table, placed another chair opposite, as a *vis-à-vis,* and, locking the door inside, he placed the key on the table; then, opening the window, he went on the balcony, closing the window behind him, got into the hallway by another window, rejoined Katy, told her everything was all right so far as Robert was concerned, and left the hotel.

It was half past eight. Mathew must be on his way to the station, if it was his intention to go; but Jerry said to himself, laughing, "He won't go, though he may come to the station in search of Robert and to tell him of his loss, for by this time he must have missed his overcoat and the precious letter." And, sure enough, as Jerry approached the station he saw Mathew anxiously scanning the faces of every one who passed him, while his face bore a look of disappointment. He looked at his watch every minute; then walked among the crowd looking for Robert; but no Robert came.

CHAPTER XLII.

It was nine o'clock. The train was ready to start. Mathew ran up and down the platform looking at every carriage; then the whistle blew; the train began to move and was soon out of the station, leaving Mathew standing on the platform looking after it in despair. What could have happened to Robert? Why had he not come at the appointed time? There was something wrong somewhere; and who could have taken his overcoat? Could Robert have played him a trick and stolen a march on him by going alone to claim Lady Florence? No, it could not be; and he felt a flush of shame at the very thought. "No, no; I won't believe it; he 's a gentleman, and so far has acted frankly with me. Really our calling makes us suspect every one; still, I won't believe it; I 'll go to the hotel and inquire for him."

He did so. A servant went up to his room, and came down reporting that he was not in. Another servant said that he had heard him early in the morning tell Thomas that he was going out with him. Thomas had waited for him outside, but he had not seen Robert come down. He might have come, met Thomas, and gone out with him. Thomas came at that moment, however, and declared that Robert had given him the slip, for he had not come to meet him as he had promised to do. Mathew thought this quite probable, as Robert was to meet him at the station. Something must have happened to him on the way, or he might have gone to his hotel and waited there for him. Had he forgotten their arrangement? This was very provoking, for they had lost their train Yes, it might be so, but that did not explain to him the loss of his coat, in the pocket of which was the letter. Did whoever took the coat know about the letter? No, the coat was not stolen for the sake of the letter, for that could be of no use to anyone except themselves. No, it had been taken by a common thief. Had Robert discovered the thief and gone after him? But how could he have known that the

coat had been stolen? "Really," thought Mathew, "I am becoming, as I used to be in England, dazed. Can Miss Hogg be at the bottom of this? But no; I am getting worse and worse. How could a lady go to my room and run away with my overcoat? This is madness! Had she gone there, which is not probable, she might have taken the letter, but not the overcoat; and, again, no one knew about the letter but Robert and myself. Could Robert have done it? O, there, I 'm at it again; I must be going mad!"

By this time Mathew had reached his hotel; he went up to his room, hoping to find Robert there, but he did not; he hurried to the chief of police and told him all that had occurred. To his surprise, he saw that the chief suspected Robert of having gone to Antwerp, and said to him, "Monsieur Mathew, don't be anxious about Robert; go home and wait, and probably to-morrow you 'll receive a telegram from him telling you that he has the young lady safe and sound."

Mathew's face reddened with anger and indignation. How dare Monsieur Robert to take it upon himself to act without his leave?

"Perhaps he thought he could do better alone, with less danger, I mean. He is a clever man, and as long as he finds the young lady what need you care? These detectives are slippery fellows. Do you English detectives never try to overreach one another? The French ones do, I assure you."

Mathew felt a little less sore over Robert's trick as he remembered that Walgrave and himself had tried their best to outdo each other; still, he felt humiliated, and he resolved to give Robert a piece of his mind, whether he found the child or not; and, thanking the chief of police, he returned to his hotel and retired, not in the best of humors.

The next morning he went to his breakfast at the usual hour, but there was no letter or telegram awaiting him. Robert seemed to have taken the whole business off his hands without the least excuse or explanation for so doing, and Mathew had never before felt so enraged, nor had he ever been made to feel himself of so little consequence.

When, at nine o'clock, he had heard nothing from Robert, he left his hotel and went to the chief of police, who, after hearing his complaint, said: "Wait a moment; we shall soon hear something; supposing Robert to have left here last night he must have reached Antwerp in the night, and he could not have been able to call at the convent before eight o'clock in the morning; he would not have been admitted in a case like this one, in the middle of the night, so he must have waited until morning before presenting his letter to the chief of police, who may have accompanied him to the convent; or should he have had other pressing matters on hand, he would send one of his detectives with Robert. There is always some unforeseen delay in these matters. Now, let us say that, taking everything into consideration, they arrived at the *Couvent des Ursulines,* which is in the outskirts of the town, at nine o'clock; then come explanations; the nuns will not give up the child unless they are sure that everything is all right; but, being assured by the Antwerp police that it is, they may deliver up the child; as the chief of police shoulders the responsibility they allow him to take her; but, you see, it takes time; so that I do not really expect a telegram before ten o'clock; it is almost ten now. Stay here; I will send one of the men to your hotel to see if one has come."

The man was sent and soon returned reporting that there was nothing there for Monsieur Mathew.

The chief looked grave and said, "I will soon clear up this matter;" and, writing a telegram, he sent it to Antwerp to the mother superioress of the convent. Returning to Mathew, he said, "We shall soon know now what is going on down there. Your mind will soon be relieved, Mr. Mathew; in less than an hour you will have news of Monsieur Robert."

The chief was quite right, but the news did not come in the manner he expected.

Mathew could not keep quiet; he paced the room, then went out, saying, "I 'll be back soon." As he came out of the door he was almost upset by a gentleman coming in on a run.

"Mille pardons," said the newcomer, trying to pass

Mathew, not even looking at the party he had nearly knocked down.

But Mathew seized him by the arm and detained him, saying, "You here, Monsieur Robert!"

"What! Mr. Mathew! Ah, *mon ami,* I was in search of you. Why are you here—why are you not gone to Antwerp? Why have you waited, even if I failed to meet you according to promise? You had the letter and could do without me," said Robert, excitedly. "I have just left your hotel and was told that you were here; the man you sent to fetch some letters or telegrams left word to have them sent here, so I have come myself to see what it all means."

"Come inside;" said Mathew, feeling very much ashamed for having doubted him. So Robert, placing his arm in that of Mathew, went in with him to the chief's office.

"O," exclaimed the chief, "so you have come, Monsieur Robert! Did you come by telegraph? We have been telegraphing for you, or at least for news of you. Where do you come from? Have you been to Antwerp? But in that case you could hardly be back so soon. Explain yourself. Your friend, Monsieur Mathew, has been very anxious about you. Why did you not meet him at the railroad station last night, and do you know anything about his overcoat, which has disappeared with the letter?"

"Yes, Monsieur Jourdain, I know about the overcoat, but there is no letter in the pocket of it."

"You know about my coat!" exclaimed Mathew in surprise, "and where is it?"

"In my room, *mon ami,* and how it got there is beyond my comprehension;" and he related what had occurred the previous night as far as he knew, and what the reader already knows. "Well," he continued, "I must have gone to sleep with the flowers in my hands, for I remember nothing more. This morning I awoke quite surprised to find myself sitting in my armchair before the table, on which were three bottles, one of wine, half empty; the empty one had contained brandy, and the other was filled with port wine; two glasses half emptied stood there, and a pack of soiled playing cards was strewn about. I could not believe my own eyes; I thought I must have the night-

mare; my head was so heavy and I felt so sleepy that I closed my eyes again and must have slept for hours, for when I awoke again the sun was shining brightly. I looked at my watch, but it had stopped at three o'clock, so that I could not have wound it the night before. I looked around my room. I had not been dreaming, for there was the table with the bottles, glasses, and cards, and on my bed lay something that did not belong to me; I took it up, and to my great surprise found it was your coat."

"My coat! Impossible! How came it to be there? I had left it hanging on my room door, and when I went home to put it on to go to the station I found my door unlocked and the coat and woolen scarf gone; and you tell me that you found the coat in your room. But pardon me for interrupting you, Monsieur Robert; please go on."

"Well, there's little more to tell, *mon ami.* Seeing both your coat and your woolen scarf on my bed, I felt sure that you had come to my room in search of me, not having found me at the train; still, that would not have accounted for your leaving your coat behind, nor for the bottles on the table, and I can assure you, *foi d'honnète homme,* that I did not drink any of the contents of those bottles," he said, with some show of indignation, as he saw both the chief and Mathew smile, for they really believed that Robert must have taken too much the night before, and was inventing this fine story about the flowers which seemed to have disappeared while he slept, for when asked to produce them he could not do it. Still, the coat remained to be accounted for. How had it got there?

"Well, go on," said Monsieur Jourdain. "What did you do next?"

"I tried to leave my room, but the door was locked, and no key was in the lock; it had not fallen on the floor; I turned to the table, and there it was among the bottles. I never put it there, I am quite certain. I ran downstairs and looked at the clock, and to my surprise and consternation it was half past nine. I called a passing cab and went to Mr. Mathew's hotel, expecting to be told that he had not been seen since last night, but, on the contrary, heard that he had breakfasted, gone out, and since then had sent to inquire for letters and was waiting for them at the *préfecture de police,* and here I am. Now, what

can you make of it all? For my part I am nonplused; I give it up; and my head is so heavy that I could go off to sleep again. O, you need not laugh, it was not what I imbibed last night, for, as far as that goes, I might as well suspect you, Monsieur Mathew, of having taken your share with me, since you forgot your coat and comforter on my bed. What do you say to that, *mon ami?*—and yet I know that it is not so."

"He is right," said the chief; "there is some mystery here that we shall have to solve before we find ourselves on the right track. O, here comes the answer to my telegram, but, of course, it will be worthless; it will only have puzzled the mother superioress."

Monsieur Jourdain opened the telegram leisurely, as though it were of no consequence; but at a glance at the contents an exclamation of surprise escaped him, and he seemed greatly interested; then, laying it on the table and covering it with his right hand, he said, "Well, gentlemen, this may throw light upon this mystery. At least, Mr. Mathew, your mind will be relieved in regard to Lady Florence; she is by this time probably in England."

Mathew's face flushed with disappointment; some one had been ahead of him in discovering the child's retreat and removing her. Had he not lost his train last night he might have arrived there in time; now he had lost the honor and the reward. All this passed through his mind like a flash of lightning. The flush left his face and he was very pale when he asked what was in the telegram.

As for Robert, he leaned forward with staring eyes, and was all eagerness to hear who had forestalled them.

The chief, taking up the telegram, read as follows: "This morning an English detective came to our convent accompanied by our chief of police and an English *bonne soeur*. The name of the gentleman was Walgrave, from London; his papers were correct—our chief had examined them, and also his detective badge; he is employed by Lady Montgomery to search for her niece, who, he said, was in our convent; he had traced her there. I denied that Lady Florence was in our convent, but he insisted that Miss Isabelle Reynolds was Lady Florence, and that I might question the child, which I did, and, after some hesitation, the little girl admitted that she was Lady Florence, so I

had to give her up, and the *bonne soeur* took charge of her. The English detective went away laughing merrily with our chief of police, and saying, 'We are going back to England by way of Hastings; I long to place this young lady in her aunt's arms. What rejoicing there will be!' 'Yes,' said our chief, 'and the good reward.' 'Yes, monsieur,' said Walgrave, 'the reward and the honor; it will mean promotion for me.' That is all we know, M. Jourdain. I have told you everything in detail, for your telegram of this morning made me uneasy. O, I forgot to say that it was half past eight o'clock when they all left our convent. They had a carriage at the gate."

"That 's all, except the mother superioress's signature," said Monsieur Jourdain, refolding the telegram.

Mathew was very pale, and there was a tremor in his voice as he said, "I am pleased that the young lady is found, but I wish that it had been my luck to bring her back to England. O, Monsieur Robert, I told you that there was danger in delay, though you would not admit it."

"Ah, *mon ami,* I am sorry; I 'm unhappy on your account, and I can do nothing to rectify my mistake. What do you intend to do now?"

"Nothing, as far as Lady Florence is concerned. They don't need me any longer."

"Then you will go back to England?"

"No, I am going to hunt down Jerry and his mother, and through them implicate Miss Hogg, and have her punished. I shall want your testimony, for you heard them discuss Lady Florence."

"Yes, my friend, I did, and I will help you, *foi d'honnète homme;* let us not delay this time, but strike while the iron is hot."

"What about the coat?" said the chief; "that is a mystery so far."

"Yes," said Mathew, "and must so remain until we have captured Jerry and his mother."

Mathew and Robert went straight to the hotel, and called for Thomas. The clerk replied that early that morning a letter had come for him from his master, telling him to join him in London, and he had left immediately on receipt of it, and had asked him (the clerk) to say good-by to Robert, whom he was sorry to leave without seeing.

Robert and Mathew looked at each other as if to say, "What is to be our next move? We are checkmated here again." Then a light came into Robert's eyes, as he said, "Leave me for a moment; I must see Katy."

Mathew left the hotel and Robert went upstairs in quest of Katy, and had the good fortune to meet her in one of the corridors. She would have passed him with a toss of her head if he had n't stopped her by saying, "Well, Katy, *ma chérie,* won't you speak to me?"

"O," she replied, "I did n't think you cared; since you have had Thomas he has been everything to you, and I have been cast off like an old shoe. What do you want?"

"O, *ma belle* Katy, what has become of Thomas? I want to speak to him and I can't find him."

"O, indeed! Always Thomas! If you 're not careful you 'll have Thomas on the brain soon; and I like your cheek to come and ask me about him when you know that I always hated him. Is he likely to come and tell me where he 's going? No, I don't know and I don't care. Anything more you want to know? You 're a nice footman, ain't you? My mistress hired you to interpret for her and you 're never on hand when you 're wanted. And what are you masquerading in gentlemen's clothes for? Are you trying to fool some other girl as you did me?" Having given him that crusher she passed on to her mistress's rooms and banged the door in his face, for he had followed her, hoping to gain some information by an unguarded word, for if he made her angry she might forget herself, and so give him a clew concerning Jerry's whereabouts; but she checkmated him there again by slamming the door in his face. He had intended to ask for Miss Hogg, and to make her talk also by telling her that he no longer desired to remain in her service.

Katy had played her part well by making him believe that Miss Hogg was displeased at his long absence, and, having done that, she thought it wise to beat a retreat; she did n't want to give him time to ask for Miss Hogg so that he might make his excuses to her, for, had he insisted on doing so, her refusal might have made him suspicious, and that would n't do, for Miss Hogg had not yet returned from her trip, wherever she had gone.

CHAPTER XLIII.

We left Miss Hogg going to Mrs. Jerry's with Katy. Let us explain how she managed to impersonate Walgrave and remove the child from the convent at Antwerp, for of course the reader has guessed that it was Miss Hogg, and not Walgrave, who had done it.

Mistress and maid arrived safely at No. 25 Rue Montmartre, where they kept their disguises in case of need, and they soon had Mrs. Jerry disguised as a nun; her mild old face and quiet manners went far toward making the disguise seem real. After being told what was expected of her she was told to take a cab and go to the steamer *Eugénie* to take passage for Havre de Grace, and that Miss Hogg would join her there disguised as a gentleman detective, but that she was not to notice her until after they had landed in Havre, and she must not forget her rôle of *bonne soeur,* and the less she talked the better; if they could outwit the detectives this time all would be well, and she would then send her to America, where her son would meet her in a short time.

Mrs. Jerry said that she would do her best, but begged Miss Hogg to return the young lady to her people.

"If I could do so without danger to all of us I would certainly do it," replied Miss Hogg; "and had I known all the trouble it would entail I would never have taken her. I was mad with rage at their insults and wanted to retaliate, and could see no other way to do it. I knew it would be a terrible blow to Lady Montgomery and to all her family, and I did n't look far enough ahead to see the consequences of my deed until it was too late; and now, if they can prove that I have taken her—they know I have—but so far they have been unable to prove it—it would, so far as I am concerned, make a great scandal, and cost my father a great deal of money; and as for you and your son it would be imprisonment for a great many years. So you see that we must go on, and this will be the last time that I will mix you or your son up in the matter

until all danger is over. Now you had better go; you have money. I am almost ready myself, but we must not be seen together on this side of the water."

Katy walked to the door with the good sister, then returned to Miss Hogg to complete her disguise.

"Be very careful, Katy; my make-up must be perfect, for I shall be seen in the daytime."

"Sure, Mamie; you bet I 'll do my best; and what fun it will be to take in both that Mathew and Robert!"

"And Walgrave," laughed Miss Hogg. "O, my heart, how mad he 'll be when he hears that I impersonated him! But we 're going too fast; it is n't done yet; I only hope none of the Antwerp police know him, or I 'll be done for. I 'm much younger than he is."

"Well, Mamie, could n't you say that you 're his cousin, and that you are the one who is employed on Lady Montgomery's case?"

"Yes, I might do so if necessary. I must keep my wits about me, for things are sure never to go as you want them to. Now I must go. I really look a fine young fellow,"—looking at herself in the glass;—"I won't disgrace Walgrave. How lucky it was that I got his badge, for without it I could do nothing in this case. Now, Katy, remove all signs of disguise and everything that belongs to me, for you may depend upon it the detectives will come here as soon as they miss Jerry. Tell Jerry my plans and that he is to meet me to-morrow night near the railway station, for I shall return by train, and before returning to the hotel I must know what has happened during my absence. I shall not be able to come here to change my disguise; he must find me another place and manage to get some of my own clothes there during the day. As for you, don't leave the hotel for fear of some one inquiring for me; I must be supposed to be in my own rooms. You try to manage that all right, and I think I can do the rest if Jerry prevents Mathew and Robert from following me to-night."

"He will do it, Mamie, so don't trouble about him, but go ahead with your own part of the program."

"Well, good-by, Katy, I 'm off;" and Miss Hogg ran down the stairs whistling, met the landlady in the hall, who took him (disguised) for a visitor; smiled, nodded,

and passed on, got in a cab on the way to the pier, bought a ticket at the office, boarded the *Eugénie,* walked about till he saw the *bonne soeur* sitting on one of the benches with her beads in her hands and her eyes cast down devoutly; then he went to his stateroom and remained there to all appearances very seasick. He had a long and very rough trip and arrived at Havre de Grace at eight o'clock.

The sister had not escaped seasickness, and she looked pale and ill. Miss Hogg walked on ahead, the sister following at some distance. Miss Hogg stopped at the Café Anglais and seemed to be examining the tempting food exposed in the window; the sister came to a standstill, and as she passed the café was also attracted by the French delicacies. Her *mal de mer* did not seem to have interfered with her appetite. Miss Hogg whispered, without looking, "Go in, ask for a private room and order your supper; at eleven o'clock ask for a guide to take you on board the steamer *Sultan,* which leaves for Antwerp at twelve."

The nun went in, apparently very timid, and asked for a private room. The hotel keeper was all *empressement* for the *bonne soeur.* Miss Hogg walked on, then came back, ordered supper, ate it, and went out again, not daring to remain there all the evening for fear of some English folks coming in striking up an acquaintance with her. At eleven o'clock she was on board the *Sultan,* and soon saw the *bonne soeur* come on. So far everything had gone right.

They reached Antwerp in due time. The *bonne soeur* was directed to a quiet restaurant, many idlers proposing to show her the way; she chose a young boy among the crowd and gave him a franc for his trouble. Miss Hogg, having seen her safely housed, went to a small café and had an early breakfast, then went to the prefecture of police and had a long talk with the chief, relating the whole business—how he had followed Miss Hogg to Paris and had secured proof against her by having discovered the young lady's retreat, but that before arresting her he had thought it best to secure Lady Florence for fear that some of her accomplices might remove her; and though it was his intention to have Miss Hogg punished, still, the most essential thing was the recovery of the young lady;

then they would attend to the punishment of the guilty parties.

"So your name is Walgrave," said the chief of police; "you are very young to be intrusted with such an important case; excuse my saying so; here we always employ old graybeards, as having more experience."

"Surely, monsieur, since I have been so successful as to track Lady Florence to the *Couvent des Ursulines* they will not have to find fault with me because of my black mustache," giving it a curl with his finger and thumb, and laughing merrily.

"You are right, Monsieur Walgrave, quite right. I am at your disposal. Why did not Monsieur Robert accompany you? I see his name in this letter."

"I thought it best to have him watch Miss Hogg so that she may not give us the slip."

"Very good; I see that you understand detective work. You will allow me to see your badge, Monsieur Walgrave?"

"Certainly." And the badge was produced.

Everything having been declared satisfactory, the chief sent for a cabriolet and invited Mr. Walgrave to ride, and they left for the convent, picking up the *bonne soeur* on the way, Walgrave explaining that he had brought her with him from England to take charge of the young lady, as he had not dared tell Lady Montgomery that he had found her niece until he actually had her in his possession, because they had already disappointed her once when they had felt sure that they had her.

"You are a prudent man, I see," replied the chief, with some appreciation of the good sense of so young a man.

The *bonne soeur* had said but little, nor was she expected to talk; she was employed by Walgrave to take care of the child whom she had never seen, and of course she did not feel interested in her beyond being paid for her trouble.

They arrived at the convent before eight o'clock, secured the child as we have related, and had left the convent by half past eight, the chief of police taking them back to town and leaving them at the office of the steamer which would take them to Hastings; he saw Walgrave purchase the ticket, and wishing them *bon voyage,* he de-

parted with a ten pound note in his hand, which Walgrave had left there when he shook hands with him.

As soon as the chief had turned the corner Walgrave said, "We have time for a walk before the steamer leaves, have we not?" addressing the clerk.

"Yes," replied the latter, "an hour."

"Well, then, let us go; and we need not return here, but go straight on board." So they left, the *bonne soeur* leading the way to an obscure street where the room was that she had occupied after having placed Lady Florence in a boarding school. As she had a key there was no trouble in getting into her room. They met the landlady, who said, *"Ah, bonne soeur, où allez-vous?"*

Mrs. Jerry, guessing what she was asking, said in English, "To Mrs. Martin's room; I 'm her sister; she is going to meet me here, and we are going back to England, so that she will not require the room any longer. Here 's the money instead of a week's notice."

"I 'm sorry to lose my tenant," said the woman quite indifferently, and, pocketing the money, she left them.

Mrs. Jerry, having some of her clothes there, had soon made a change in her appearance; then, making a bundle of her cap and veil, they left without having been seen, and reached the steamer—not the one bound for Hastings, but for Hamburg. Walgrave saw them on board, giving Mrs. Jerry a letter in which she would find her orders and a good sum of money. He then left them, took the train for Brussels and went from there to Paris, reaching there about ten o'clock at night, Jerry meeting him outside the station and leading him to a small room in the Chaussée d'Antin. A transformation being soon made, Miss Hogg gave the parcel in which she had wrapped up her disguise to Jerry, who was himself disguised as an old man, and told him to go to the hotel with it and see if the coast was clear. He had told her all that had happened during her absence, and how he had got rid of the two detectives by putting one to sleep and stealing the other's coat, which made Miss Hogg laugh heartily. She told Jerry to meet her the next day in that little room and she would tell him what to do next.

CHAPTER XLIV.

JERRY went to the hotel and asked for Miss Hogg, saying that the parcel was for her, and that he had orders not to deliver it to anyone but herself or her maid. Katy was sent for, and the parcel was given to her with a note, the old man leaving the hotel without having been recognized as Jerry. Katy, after reading the note, slipped out of the hotel by the back door, and an hour later came in with Miss Hogg just as if they had both been for a walk.

Robert was on the watch, and could n't understand why he had not seen them go out, but he was sure that Katy was in the hotel some hours previous, for had she not slammed the door in his face, so that if she could have gone out unseen by him why could not Miss Hogg? He approached her, saying, "When you are at leisure I should like to speak to you, madam."

"Well, what is it you want? It is to excuse yourself, I suppose, for not coming last night when I sent Katy for you. Well, let me tell you that I want none of your excuses, and when I pay a servant it is that I may have him whenever I want him; not to have him gallivanting about town and coming to me just when it suits him, as you have done ever since I hired you; so here 's your money, my fine fellow, and I discharge you from my service."

And Robert found himself dismissed before he had the opportunity to give up his situation, and he thought the least said the soonest mended, as he felt sure that she knew he was a detective; so he only muttered that he was sorry if he had displeased her. She walked upstairs without another look, while he turned to Katy saying, "*Ma bien-aimée,* I shall regret you forever," placing his hand on his heart.

"How many girls have you said that to?" she said, laughing, and tossing her head she ran after her mistress, leaving Robert to console himself as best he could, which he did by going and repeating it all to Mathew.

Mathew and Robert had both been at 25 Rue Mont-

martre, and had found no trace of Mrs. Jerry; she had paid her rent and gone away, they had been told, and had not said where she was going, and no one had asked her. There was nothing strange about her. So that all clews were lost as far as the Jerrys were concerned, and so far nothing could be proved against Miss Hogg.

"Ah, *mon ami,*" Robert had said, "the demoiselle will disappear too."

"No, no," said Mathew, "a person like her cannot disappear; her father is a millionaire, and through her we may yet have Jerry, and as soon as we have him we shall prove Miss Hogg guilty of abducting the child."

"Well, what do you propose to do, Mr. Mathew?"

"I shall leave you to watch Miss Hogg's movements, and I will go back to England. I am curious to know how Walgrave managed to find Lady Florence, and why he has kept it so secret, for I have received neither telegram nor letter. I suppose he wants to have the matter well settled before he lets us know; and we would not have known that he had found her but that the chief of police here telegraphed to the convent. I am really surprised at Walgrave's conduct toward me, for we agreed to work together. However, I leave here to-morrow, and you can report to me if there 's anything new about Miss Hogg's movements."

The next day Mathew left Paris for England. His first move was to call at police headquarters. The chief received him with some surprise, saying, "I thought you were still at Paris; have you succeeded?"

"No, sir, but Walgrave has; it will be a fine thing for him; the honor and the reward will be his. I have done my best, but nothing but failure has attended my best efforts."

The captain looked at Mathew, stupefied with astonishment; he did n't seem to understand Mathew's words. He answered, "Walgrave must have discovered Lady Florence quite recently, for he was here less than an hour ago, and was wondering if you had succeeded, for he had not heard from you for three days."

Mathew turned so pale that the captain thought him on the point of fainting; he hurriedly gave him a chair and called for a glass of water, which revived him, and

he murmured, "O, is it possible? Tricked again! But how and by whom?" And as soon as he had recovered himself he related all that the reader knows.

The captain admitted that Mathew could not have done differently; still, the shame rested upon them all, that the English detectives, the very best in the whole world, should have failed, and it was very humiliating. Walgrave was sent for, and when he learned that he had been impersonated his rage knew no bounds and it was feared that he would have an apoplectic fit. He asked leave of the captain to go and hunt up the miscreant who had dared to impersonate him. He left for Antwerp the same night, saw the chief of police the next day, and when he presented himself as Walgrave the detective, "I am charmed," said the old gentleman, "to make your acquaintance, Monsieur Walgrave; your son was here some days ago; very clever young man; you must be proud of him; he will be a great man one day."

Walgrave was suffocating with rage. His son, that villain! And how old did the chief of police take him to be, who was only forty years old? He could not be the father of a grown-up son, be he ever so young. He was very sensitive about his age, for he was believed to be a bachelor, and he prided himself on not looking more than thirty-five at the most; and here was an old graybeard calling him the father of a grown-up young man in all good faith, there was no doubt of that. He felt down-hearted, and twisted his black mustache, which was beginning to be streaked with gray, only slightly, it is true; still, to be taken for the father of a grown-up son! He felt indignant, to say the least; and looking sternly at the chief, who was at a loss to know what he could have said to offend the English detective, he said, "No, sir, he was not my son; he was a villain who deceived you; he was not a detective at all."

"What!" said the old gentleman, all excitement now, and indignant at having been taken in by a fraud, and so young a one too; "still his papers and badge were correct, I can swear to that. I did remark to him that he was very young to be intrusted with such an important case, but he only laughed and said that no one had a right to find fault with his youth since he had succeeded in discovering where

Lady Florence was, and I agreed with him. And really, Mr. Walgrave, he resembled you greatly—tall and dark, with bright intelligent black eyes."

"Well, sir, I must look like a villain, for he is one."

"But, monsieur," said the chief, mildly, trying to soothe Walgrave, "where and how did he get a badge like yours? Those badges are not given to every one, like medicinal advertisements, in our country, sir, nor in yours, that I know of. Some one in your police must be betraying you and is in league with the guilty party."

"No, no," replied Walgrave, excitedly; "I begin to see daylight. I lost a badge sometime ago; how, I have never discovered. She must have taken it from me; she must be a witch, for I 'll swear she never touched me."

"Oho, Mr. Walgrave, so you 're a gay spark, eh? and have ladies taking your badge away without your knowledge. But then who was the young man who represented you here?"

"It was herself, probably."

"No, no, monsieur," said the chief, almost angrily; "do you take me for a fool to mistake a man for a woman—I mean a woman for a man? Why, he was as tall as yourself, and nearly as stout, and had the finest black mustache that you could wish to see—it just matches his eyes. No, monsieur, it was a man, I am positive."

"Well, sir, allow me to think otherwise; and I should like to telegraph to Mr. Robert and find out if Miss Hogg is still in the hotel."

That was done, and the reply was, "No, she left last night for Havre de Grace, and intends to leave Havre in a few days for America. Her maid is with her; they are going in the company of some American friends. I telegraphed last night to Mathew, who wired back that the child had been taken away, not by Detective Walgrave, but by some one representing him, and who must have been in Miss Hogg's pay. I have seen nothing suspicious in Miss Hogg's conduct since Monsieur Mathew left here; he has not told me to follow her; I have wired back to know if I am to do so."

"Well, what do you think of that, Mr. Walgrave? Perhaps this Miss Hogg has really had nothing to do with the matter. Sometimes we make up our minds that a

certain person is guilty and nothing can shake our belief until somebody else who thought differently gets hold of the guilty party, and then what becomes of our theory? And really, Mr. Walgrave, I see no reason, no sense, in accusing Miss Hogg of taking the young lady away. What can she do with her? What will she gain by it? She is rich, so it is not for money; and if she is guilty she exposes herself to a terrible punishment—here it would be imprisonment—and you may be sure that she would never risk that punishment for the love of mischief or for petty revenge; so, my friend, you will find in time that it was not she, but more likely some distant relation of her own family, in order to get the inheritance, for she is immensely rich, you tell me."

"There is much in what you say, monsieur; still, my instinct points to Miss Hogg, and I shall follow her to America."

"Very well," replied the chief, "I will telegraph to Monsieur Robert to that effect; or do you wish him to go with you?"

"No; I shall employ American detectives when I get there. I must try to sail on the same steamer she does. I propose to watch her during the voyage, and I hope to have made some discovery before we land there. She would never dare have the child with her; still, I must and will be on the lookout for a fair little girl—or boy—for that matter, and in every part of the ship. I have Lady Florence's portrait here, and I will be able to identify her on the spot."

"Let me see that portrait," said the chief of police. And, looking at it attentively, he said, "There is no doubt whatever that this is the portrait of the child we took from the convent, except that her hair was not so long and must have been recently cut; but the features, the eyes, the pretty, smiling mouth, are the same. The child certainly did not look unhappy to me; certainly not as if she was being taken against her wishes; she came quite willingly with the sister."

"I believe you, monsieur," replied Walgrave, "and I feel mystified myself; there is a mystery somewhere; they must have imposed upon the child in some way, for she is high-spirited and fearless, and, had she been so dis-

posed, she would have claimed the protection of the lady superioress. What puzzles me is that she would have been so willing to leave the convent with strangers."

"Yes, Monsieur Walgrave, but if it is as you suppose, were they strangers? That 's the question."

Walgrave started in his chair, and slapping his knees with his hands, exclaimed, "No, sir, they were not strangers. I see it all; they were the same parties who had taken her originally; that 's one mystery solved; you may depend upon it that it was Miss Hogg and her maid."

"Is her maid a stout old woman about fifty-five?" asked the chief, with an incredulous smile.

"No, sir; she is a bright, mischievous girl of about twenty; she took me in once."

"Ah, ah, monsieur, you seem very unfortunate with the fair sex," said the chief, laughing merrily. "Why don't you get married my friend?—then all the pretty girls will leave you in peace; look at me; not one of them gives me even a side glance."

"No," thought Walgrave, "and I don't wonder at it; you must be eighty, if a day"—though he was not really seventy, but Walgrave owed him a grudge about his own age. "Does he compare himself with me? Why, I know twenty young girls who would be only too pleased to be asked by me;" and he stroked his mustache complacently, while the chief laughed at his own joke.

"Yes, monsieur, take my advice; you are not a bit too old to marry. But, joking aside, you must dine with me to-day. The steamer does n't leave before to-night."

Walgrave accepted the invitation and had a merry time with the old gentleman, who was really a good fellow, a little more fond of a joke than Englishmen usually are. They parted at the steamer well pleased with each other, and they shook hands heartily; but, as the chief said to himself as he went away, young Walgrave was more generous than old Walgrave, for the latter had not left a ten pound note in his hand at parting, as the other had done; nor had he expected it; that was only another of his jokes.

CHAPTER XLV.

WALGRAVE reached Havre de Grace, a beautiful seaport, one of the best in France. Ships leave there for all parts of the world. The steamer *La Gascogne* would leave for New York in two days. Walgrave bought a first class ticket under the name of Brownlow; then he went to a barber's and had himself clean shaven, not without a feeling of regret, but he had to assume a disguise, and a false beard would never do, for he would have to mingle with all the passengers or how could he find out what he wanted to know? He must gain the confidence of all, and what garb could be more suitable for that purpose than that of a minister? He had a tall, commanding figure, quiet manners, and a gentlemanly appearance; and his calling would permit him to go all over the ship and speak to every one. Would Miss Hogg know him? Not likely; he would be in no hurry to make her acquaintance, but would allow things to take their course; he knew whom he had to deal with, and he would keep his wits about him. He went to the best tailor in town and ordered a complete outfit, and the morning of his departure he assumed his disguise and felt gratified at his appearance; it almost repaid him for the loss of his mustache; he certainly looked well in his black suit, white choker, and silk hat; and, with his large silk umbrella under his arm and his portmanteau in his hand, he certainly did not look like a detective.

He boarded the ship, stood on deck, watched the passengers come aboard, had a smile for every one, and often raised his hat to ladies who, he could see, were Americans; and they did not fail to see that a handsome English minister was on board, and several of the ladies promised themselves to flirt with him. He looked handsome and well to do, and it was so seldom they saw a good-looking man in America that we may forgive them for looking up sweetly at him and returning his smile. Then, too, we all know that in every country we can make

more free with a clergyman than with any other gentleman without setting evil tongues wagging.

Walgrave had seen a great many of the passengers come aboard, but Miss Hogg and her party had not yet made their appearance, and he was fearful that they were not coming. Had she changed her mind about going by that steamer?

The whistle was blowing loud enough to deafen an artilleryman, yet no Miss Hogg. Would she disappoint him again? She might come yet, for there was still a half hour before the time of departure, and carriage loads were still coming. A grand equipage dashed alongside the steamer; it was from the Hotel du Havre; ladies were alighting from it, and O, joy! Miss Hogg's tall form became visible to Walgrave. Now would she recognize him? He would soon know. Naturally enough, he being a minister, they looked at him as they passed; he politely raised his hat; they bowed and passed on to their stateroom, one of the ladies saying to Miss Hogg, "We shall have to behave ourselves for we have a minister on board."

"O, bosh!" she replied, "ministers are not made of wood that I know of; we must try to have fun with him by and by; it will help to pass the time. I wonder if his wife is on board, for, of course, he has one; those ministers always marry so young, and, though they are always preaching about giving up the pleasures of the world, they manage to get a good share of them at the lowest rates;" and she laughed aloud.

"O, Mamie," said one of the young ladies, "you are too hard on them. This one has lovely teeth; I noticed them when he smiled."

'Not his own, you may bet, for he is not so very young," Miss Hogg replied.

By this time they had reached their staterooms. Walgrave had, of course, only heard the beginning of this very edifying discourse, but that was quite enough to prove that they were interested in him, and that he had not been recognized by Miss Hogg; now it remained to be seen if Katy would be more shrewd than her mistress, for he had quite as much cause to fear her. He heard some one behind him laughing heartily; he did not turn, for he was a born detective and always on the alert, but

that laugh made his heart beat, for he surely had heard it before, and he remembered that that was at the Red Lion Hotel, and had come from the throat of the young woman who had played him such a trick with her soda water. He managed to shift his position without attracting the notice of the young person, who seemed to be having a good time with some of the other servants. Walgrave had a good look at her, but did not recognize her as the young wife at the Red Lion, but as the maid at the Temperance Hotel, London; so, after all, she was not a hotel servant, but Miss Hogg's maid. Well, really, they seemed to have played football with the detectives. "But wait, my lady, your time will come yet, and perhaps sooner than you expect." And, seeing her tugging at a big portmanteau, he said, as she passed, "Allow me, my child; that 's too heavy for you; why not let the men carry it for you?" Taking it from her, he carried it as far as the stairs; then, calling the steward, he smiled at Katy and returned to his place.

Katy was so surprised that a gentleman should carry the heavy portmanteau for her that she could only say, "O, thank you, sir; it 's too kind of you."

Walgrave was satisfied; she had not recognized him; all was well so far, but he must watch his temper, for his voice might betray him; as long as he spoke in soft, low tones he was safe. He had made Katy's acquaintance by doing her a slight service; he must keep it up and see what he could get out of her. He said to himself, "I wish I were a priest, for then I could hear her confession and I 'm sure it would be very interesting;" and he smiled at the thought.

He heard some one say, "This minister seems to have a real good temper; he is smiling to himself."

"I suppose everything will have to be allowed to get cold while we say grace at mealtime, or you 'll see that it won't be smiles that he 'll give us," said another, crossly, but he was mistaken, for when at the table that evening the captain had said, "Reverend sir, if you wish to ask a blessing I don't suppose that anyone will object, as, though we may not all be of the same denomination as yourself, thanking God must sound the same to every one," the Rev. Mr. Brownlow had replied:

"With your kind leave, Captain Dupre, I think that, as there are so many present of different creeds, it will be wiser to let each one thank God in his own way. Let us all be friendly during this voyage, which may God make a short and pleasant one to all."

"Amen," said the captain; "that's what I call a Christian spirit; your presence, sir, will certainly add greatly to our pleasure." And a chorus of voices expressed satisfaction and approval.

The clergyman bowed his thanks, and the supper, which was very good, was enjoyed by all, as no one had as yet become seasick.

The Rev. Mr. Brownlow felt much relieved at having so successfully escaped saying grace; for had he been forced to perform the task he would have been much embarrassed, never having done it in his life, more shame to him; and in excusing himself from saying grace he had killed two birds with one stone, for of course they would not ask him to hold service on Sunday, as is often done on board ship. Still, he must pretend to read his Bible, and he had n't any, so he hunted in his portmanteau for a book that would look like one, but could only find the "Memoirs of an Old Detective," which he covered with a piece of black cloth from an old hat which he found in his stateroom, which must have been left there by the previous occupant. So the Rev. Mr. Brownlow tore it to fit the book and pinned it on securely, and the next day he had it under his arm and occasionally opened it and read devoutly from different parts of it, but he was always ready to shut it up at the approach of anyone who seemed desirous of talking with him. He certainly was not a selfish man, for he gave up his own pleasures for others, and was much liked by every one, Miss Hogg included, who often sat by him and seemed much interested in his conversation, and he seemed equally pleased with her company. In a few days they were seen walking the poop, Miss Hogg leaning on his arm, only, of course, to enable her to keep her equilibrium, for the sea was rough; yet more than one passenger smiled as they saw them so engrossed in one another.

The Rev. Sidney Brownlow must have been a free thinker, for Miss Hogg was an ardent Catholic, and when

Katy had reproved her for being so far gone on the minister and wondered what Father Cowen would say to her about falling in love with an unbeliever, she had said, "Well, I should smile, but you 're a fool; he 's not an unbeliever, and I 'll tell Father Cowen how I was trying to convert him to our faith, and that in doing so I fell in love with him."

"O, my heart! but you don't mean it, Mamie?"

"I do, or at least I think so. I like to look at him; he has such beautiful black eyes, and somehow it seems to me that I 've seen them before, and yet it cannot be, unless it was in a former life, as some people assert that we have had."

"O, but you must be far gone to talk such trash; he has bewitched you, I think. Here he comes, and of course you must go at his beck and call. And what about Lord Montgomery—is he forgotten already? Next thing you 'll be telling him all about—O, my heart! but I came near letting the cat out of the bag."

"Ah, Katy, my child, you look excited. What has happened? is Miss Hogg scolding you? can I plead your cause with her?"

"No, sir, thank you; Miss Hogg was not scolding me." He was certainly very nice; no wonder Mamie liked him.

Miss Hogg had walked slowly away, expecting the reverend gentleman to follow her, but, for once, he did not; he seemed to sympathize with Katy, who certainly looked troubled, for she feared that he might have heard her remark to her mistress, but if he had he made no reference to it; he sat down on a bench and invited her to do the same, as he wished to speak to her, and as soon as she did so he began:

"You have a very kind mistress, if I mistake not; have you known her long, or did she engage your services in England?"

"Yes, she did," replied Katy without a blush. "I don't know much about her; still she has been kind,—so far, at least."

Katy had told this untruth, fearing that if she said she had known Miss Hogg as long as she could remember, he would ply her with questions which might be very embarrassing, not knowing what Mamie might already have

told him. Walgrave had not expected such an answer and he looked surprised and disappointed, for he had hoped to make her betray her mistress by questioning her cleverly and leading her on little by little, even by asserting that Miss Hogg had confided in him, so that she could speak of the affair freely; but what could he do now? He could not tell her that she had not spoken the truth; that would have betrayed his knowledge of them previous to their meeting on board the ship, and that was not his plan; so he said, "I am sorry, my child; I wanted to ask you a few questions regarding your mistress, for you must see that I am growing very fond of her."

"Yes, sir, I have noticed it, and every one else has too." And she looked him straight in the face and saw more anger than love in his eyes; that he had been greatly disappointed in her answer was clear to her, whatever his motives were. His eyes puzzled her; she had the feeling of having seen them before, but where, and when, she could not remember, for they had not been among ministers. The thought of a disguise never came to her; everything about the Rev. Sidney Brownlow looked real; still, she had an uneasy feeling, and it vexed her not to be able to remember where she had seen those eyes before.

"Have they, my child, really noticed my attentions to your mistress?" the minister said; "and yet we hardly know our own minds; not a word of love has passed between us; it is a very serious matter, my child; yes, very serious indeed." And he arose and walked away, leaving his precious Bible on the seat, half hidden in Katy's skirt. Katy, lost in her own thoughts, looked after him. Where had she seen him? Why, his walk seemed to be getting familiar to her; yet she did not recognize him; but it would come, link by link; the eyes had haunted her, and now the walk; it would come upon her like a clap of thunder, but would it come in time, or when the mischief was done? We shall see.

CHAPTER XLVI.

KATY kept on looking after the reverend gentleman, who had gone over to Miss Hogg, she having made room for him by her side on the bench, and they soon became engrossed in each other. He seemed to be pressing his suit pretty strongly, at least so thought Katy; and though Miss Hogg laughed merrily, as if she thought it a good joke, still, she allowed her hand to remain in that of the Rev. Mr. Brownlow. Katy, somehow, did not like it; she felt a sense of uneasiness that she could not account for; she placed her left hand on the bench to steady herself as she rose from her seat, and it came in contact with the minister's Bible. She remained seated, and picked up the Bible with the intention of returning it at once to Mr. Brownlow, but on second thought she would wait until he left Miss Hogg's side, and not interrupt their conversation. Then curiosity took possession of her; she would have a look at it to see what a Protestant Bible was like, and placing it on her lap she opened it, not without conscientious scruples, however, for Father Flynn did not approve of anyone but himself reading the Bible, and of course a Protestant Bible must be the devil's book, since every Protestant, without exception, went to perdition, and none but Catholics were saved. Poor Katy was half afraid to open it; still, the temptation was so great that she could not resist it; the poor girl did not know that a Catholic and a Protestant Bible are almost exactly alike, word for word. She opened the sacred book and turned as white as a sheet. Did she read her condemnation on the first page? It certainly looked very much like it, for she leaned back in her seat and closed her eyes as if about to faint; her legs were so weak that she could not have stood up; then the color returned to her face; she sat up and put the Bible hurriedly into her pocket, looked toward her mistress, who seemed to be enjoying her conversation with the Rev. Mr. Brownlow, who had his back towards her; she gave a sigh of relief, and, getting up, walked to the side

of the ship, looked over the bulwarks, and dropped into the sea something which looked like a book, and was soon out of sight. She heard a hurried step behind her; she quaked with fear, for she knew that it was the minister; she held fast to the side of the ship, or she would have fallen, and waited to hear what he had come to say. She had n't long to wait.

"Katy, have you seen my Bible? Where is it?" and his voice was far from being soft and calm. Then, noticing Katy's pale face and trembling limbs, he asked more gently, and looking almost as pale as herself, "What 's the matter with you, child, are you ill?"

"No—yes, I mean; I have done something that will make you very angry with me; I found your Bible on the seat and I have dropped it into the sea."

"But why did you do that?" asked Walgrave, much relieved.

"Because it 's a Protestant Bible, and every one who reads it is sure to go to the devil; and if you 're going to marry my mistress you 'll become a Catholic and won't need it any more."

"O, you 're a foolish child," said the reverend gentleman, laughing, "I suppose I must forgive you for your sweet mistress's sake."

He returned to the seat where he had left Miss Hogg, but she was no longer there; he was told by the captain that she had gone to her room looking very ill. Brownlow was surprised, for he had only just left her looking the picture of health.

The fact was that Walgrave, while in the middle of one of his soft speeches to her, had suddenly remembered that he had left his Bible on the bench, and with a look of fear in his eyes he had arisen, saying, "Excuse me a moment." He had, in his excitement, spoken in his own voice, and had walked towards Katy in his own detective footsteps; he was no longer the soft-spoken minister, so calm and slow in his walk, but a man full of energy and determination, who has made a mistake and is in a hurry to rectify it. Miss Hogg looked after him with astonishment; a rosy spot appeared on her cheeks, then disappeared as suddenly, leaving her very pale as she murmured, "O, my heart, Walgrave! I must go down and compose myself; I could nev-

er speak calmly; he would guess that I had recognized him." And she had met the captain, who had remarked that she looked ill. "Yes, I feel ill," she had replied. "I think we are going to have a storm; that must be the cause of it." And she went down.

That evening she did not appear at the table and Mr. Brownlow looked uneasy and unhappy. Many of the ladies joked him about his looks and tried to flirt with him, but, though he was polite, he seemed so preoccupied that they soon left him to himself. He certainly felt very uneasy, fearing to have been recognized by Miss Hogg, but how could that be possible? He had said and done nothing suspicious, and Katy had not been near her mistress since she had found the book, and she had perhaps not even discovered that it was not a Bible, for the little fool had not dared to open it, but had simply dropped it overboard; so that her mistress's illness could not have been the result of anything that Katy could have told her. No, he was overanxious; things were all right. He regretted the loss of his detective book, for it was an old one and could not easily be replaced, if at all; still, it was better to have it at the bottom of the sea than in Katy's hands.

If Walgrave had known what was going on in Miss Hogg's room he would not have been able to sleep so soundly and peacefully as he did that night.

When Miss Hogg reached her room she asked the stewardess to call her maid, as she felt ill; and when Katy came to her pale and trembling she guessed that she knew that Walgrave was on board. When Katy saw her mistress she knew that she had had a great shock; she must have made the discovery—but how?—that Walgrave was there disguised as a minister.

"Mamie," she whispered, "you know who the Rev. Mr. Brownlow is?"

"Yes," answered Miss Hogg, "and so do you. But how did you discover it?"

"Look at his Bible," was the answer.

Miss Hogg did so, and burst out laughing when she saw that it was a detective book.

"O, the old cheat! But I should smile! I don't see, though, why we should be so frightened, for, when we come to think of it, he can't do us any harm. It certainly gave

me a start when I recognized him by his voice and walk, as he turned towards you to get back his precious Bible; in his fear that you should read it, he forgot himself and spoke in his own natural voice, and walked as he did when I had him turned out of the Temperance Hotel, and I was so far from suspecting the Rev. Mr. Brownlow of being Walgrave that the discovery turned me sick for a moment, and fearing that he would read in my eyes that I had found him out I came down here and sent for you."

"And are you still in love with him?" asked Katy mischievously, fast recovering her spirits.

"In love with him? Get out with you! I never said that I was; I only said I liked to look at him, and that I thought I had seen his fine black eyes before, but couldn't remember where. O, you bet I 'll pay him off before I 'm done with him! Look here, Katy, he must n't guess that we know him, and I shall make desperate love to him to mislead him. So it was not his Bible that you threw overboard—what was it, your 'Nelly's Memoirs'? O, my heart! but you did n't do that, did you? Why, I had n't read it."

"Well, what could I do? He was coming towards me, and I had to make him believe that I had thrown it overboard, for I wanted to keep his book to show you; and then, you know, we may learn something useful from it. Since we are playing against the detectives we may as well have the benefit of their experience."

"Sure," replied Miss Hogg; "we can read it here in my room of an evening. Let us begin now," and they did so, and had many a good laugh at the clever escapes of the rogues, and again at the detectives' maneuvers in checkmating them, and courageous, almost deadly, fights between them. It made Miss Hogg's blood boil with enthusiasm, for she was brave, and she admired a brave man, whether rogue or detective. Her black eyes would flash and her cheeks flush at every daring deed recorded, and she exclaimed, excitedly, "If I had been a man I would have been a detective; I could have done much better than many of these fellows."

"Well, why don't you marry a detective? You have a chance to do it," said Katy, merrily.

"O, look here, I would n't have Walgrave, for he 's too

old, and not half as clever and handsome as Mathew. I wonder why they did n't send him after me?"

"Well, maybe he thought he had had enough of you after you played him that trick of impersonating Walgrave; and that poor Robert! O, my heart, what fools we made of them both!" laughed Katy.

"Yes, with the aid of Jerry; and without him we would never have got through as we did. But why is Walgrave after me? does he expect to find the child with me?"

"No," said Katy; "but he hopes that by making love to you, and by patronizing me, and calling me his dear child, he 'll get us to give ourselves away by some thoughtless word that will give him a clew. He wanted very much to know how long I had known you, so as to pump me, but I soon stopped that by telling him that you had hired me quite recently and that I knew nothing about you. You should have seen his eyes flash with anger and disappointment, and his manner said as well as words could have done, 'What a brazen baggage you are, to dare tell me such a fib!' but he only said, 'I wanted to ask you a few questions about your mistress, of whom I am growing very fond.' "

"The old skin! I must lead him on to propose, and then throw him over and expose him as I did at the hotel. O, my, but did n't he look flat! I wish you had seen him."

The next day Miss Hogg was up early, and looking the picture of health. She ran up on deck, laughing merrily at some remark of some one concerning her and the Rev. Mr. Brownlow, whom she met on deck, and to whom, holding out her hand in rather a free and gushing manner, she said, "How very kind of you, sir, to have felt anxious on my account; I was told that you hardly ate any supper last night, is that so?"

The Rev. Mr. Brownlow was slightly taken aback; he had not expected such an attack; he wanted a loophole of escape, but she left him none; and he had to speak sweet words to her; and, placing her hand on his arm, he paced the deck with her. She seemed very sprightly, talked, laughed, and made sheep's-eyes at him; in fact, treated him as if he already belonged to her; he felt that it would be hard work to draw back unless he ran away, and, as Miss Hogg said, ministers are not made of wood, nor detectives

neither, it seems; for his eyes softened more than once as he felt her head against his arm, and her big, strong hand pressing his own; and the thought came to him, "I really feel kindly towards her; if she cares for me I really think that I could learn to love her; she 's a brave, clever woman, and if she loves me I can't hunt her down; I begin to feel mean already, and to betray a woman who is in love with one is unpardonable. Who would ever have thought that I who hated her and who was anxious to have her severely punished, not only for taking the child, but for having insulted and humiliated me at the Temperance Hotel, should now feel my heart beat as she presses my arm and leans her lovely head on my shoulder. How could I have been so blind? I have said she was masculine and homely. How can she be homely with those large, black eyes, and that beautiful and luxuriant black hair?" And he became so lost in admiration of Miss Hogg, and remained silent so long, that Miss Hogg looked up at him in a shy and loving way, and said, "Mr. Brownlow, have I offended you that you have not spoken to me for the last ten minutes?"

"No, no, my dear; on the contrary, I was thinking of you all the time;" and his arm found its way around her waist so lovingly that Miss Hogg looked up at him once more to see if he really meant it or if he was trying to make a fool of her. But she saw with great surprise real love in his eyes; there was no mistaking it; and her heart leaped with joy—not love; she had caught Walgrave now; he was in her power; she looked down shyly, and she allowed her perfumed head to rest on his shoulder for a moment; then, blushing, she moved away from him, which brought the reverend gentleman to his senses.

For the moment he had forgotten that many eyes were upon them, and he felt a little embarrassed when he met the eyes of the captain, who had a smile on his face, and said, "Ah, reverend sir, I see that your religion does n't prohibit love-making; there 's nothing like a sea voyage to bring out love and tender feeling."

"I believe you, captain," replied the Rev. Mr. Brownlow smiling; "I certainly never expected this attack, and I can assure you that it is real, and at my time of life too! If I can only win her for my wife I shall be the happiest man on earth."

The captain laughed and wished him success.

Of course Miss Hogg had not remained there to hear herself discussed, but at the approach of the captain had gone and joined some ladies, who also joked her about Mr. Brownlow. "Oh, my heart!" she said, "and what harm is it if he did put his arm around my waist? He 's a minister, and I 'm sure he 's not sly."

"Did he propose, Mamie, and what did he say?"

"O, well, I should smile! You don't want much, you bet. You get some one to propose to you, then you 'll know all about it."

"O, come, Mamie, do tell us. Did you accept him?"

"Would you, if he had asked you?" she replied, laughing.

"Yes, I think I could love such a handsome man, that is if he loved me."

"O, never mind the love. There 's the breakfast bell ringing, so let 's go down; I 'm starving."

After this little episode every one on board looked upon the Rev. Mr. Brownlow and Miss Hogg as an engaged couple and left them much to themlseves.

On the eighth day out land was sighted and it was expected the steamer would reach New York about noon. Miss Hogg gave her address to Mr. Brownlow. He thanked her fervently and promised to call soon on her parents; he then kissed her hand; yes, Walgrave actually kissed Miss Hogg's hand. Such is love. There is no barrier that it cannot pass, no river that it cannot bridge. Unfortunately in this case it was a one-sided love, and had Miss Hogg returned Mr. Walgrave's love my story would soon come to an end.

Miss Hogg's carriage awaited her on the arrival of the ship. The coachman touched his hat and seemed glad to see his mistress back again, and when Katy made her appearance his face flushed with pleasure; she looked at him in surprise, then blushed, and, casting down her eyes, said, "Well, I never! I never thought of him, but I always liked him; then he 's an Englishman; really, I 'm as bad as Mamie."

"Come, let 's hurry," said Miss Hogg, "and get away from the crowd. Ah, John, how do you do? Glad to see me back, eh?"

"Yes, ma'am," replied the tall coachman, touching his hat once more; but as the Rev. Mr. Brownlow moved towards Miss Hogg to wish her a last good-by, he looked very pale and turned his head away.

Katy gave him some small parcels to put in the carriage, and whispered to him, "Don't fret, she knows him; it will be all right."

Then he heard his mistress say, "Well, Mr. Brownlow, since you are coming our way, get in the carriage and we will drop you at your hotel; we have to pass it on our way to Fifth Avenue."

"If I thought that I was not intruding," said Mr. Brownlow, "I should be very happy to do so."

"Then come," said Miss Hogg, "and be happy while you can;" and to John's great astonishment he saw Miss Hogg and Walgrave enter the carriage and sit side by side, while he, Jerry, for it was he, held the door open for them. He was so lost in thought or admiration of his mistress's choice that Katy had to get in without his help; he didn't notice her until she was seated on the front seat opposite her mistress and Mr. Brownlow.

"Well, John," said his mistress, "if you have looked at me long enough to make sure that I am really your mistress I hope you will drive us home and stop on the way there at the Broadway Hotel."

"Beg pardon, ma'am; I'm so pleased to see you back again that I forgot myself."

"And you forget me, too," said Katy, laughing.

Jerry smiled, mounted his box and drove off at a good speed, owning to himself that he was puzzled to understand Miss Hogg's reasons for bringing Walgrave to America and being on such good terms with him too. Did she mean to marry him, to make her peace with Lady Montgomery? There was no telling; these Americans stopped at nothing. He must be on his guard or he would be recognized; he must try to see Katy and find out what he was expected to do. Miss Hogg was clever and she must have some very good reason for what she was doing; he would trust her; but, as for her marrying Walgrave, he could hardly believe it, unless everything was discovered and it was her only way to save herself; but that could not be, for Walgrave did not appear masterful towards her, but very loving and atten-

tive; it was his loving looks that had at first brought the thoughts into Jerry's head, and his thoughts must have kept him busy ever since, for he was forgetting to stop at the Broadway Hotel.

Katy pulled the string; he stopped, and seeing a hotel at his right he guessed that that was where he had been told to stop; but as he had only been in New York five days he barely knew his way from Mrs. Hogg's mansion in Fifth Avenue to the pier where he was to fetch Miss Hogg. He had been practicing ever since his arrival, and when told by Miss Hogg to stop at the Broadway Hotel in Broadway, he had not dared ask her where it was for fear that Walgrave would suspect him; and as it was on their way to Fifth Avenue, they were sure to stop him, and if they didn't, he would say that he had quite forgotten, and would manage to send back the reverend gentleman to his hotel in charge of some other coachman who was more likely to find it than he would be; however, Katy had been on the watch and had pulled the string in time. The Rev. Mr. Brownlow alighted with his portmanteau and umbrella, wishing Miss Hogg good-by again, and promising to call on her next day if it would not be too soon.

"Too soon!" exclaimed Miss Hogg; "certainly not; come to-night, if you feel so disposed."

"No, no, Miss Hogg, you are tired and need rest to-day; but to-morrow, since you permit me, I will do myself the honor of calling on you."

"Well, good-by," said Miss Hogg, "and mind that you come before dinner; we dine at six o'clock." Mr. Brownlow bowed his assent, smiled and disappeared into the hotel, while John, much relieved, mounted his box and was soon at No. — Fifth Avenue, not very far from where St. Patrick's Cathedral now stands.

Mr. Hogg ran down the steps, opened the carriage door, and soon had his daughter in his arms. "O, my girl," said the old man, "you have stayed away a long time from your old dad," and he kissed her affectionately and led her into the house, where her mother and Isabelle were waiting for her.

Isabelle seemed quite at home and was growing lovelier every day; her hair reached to her shoulders and she seemed to have grown since Miss Hogg last saw her. She was

making great progress in her studies. Her governess had proved to be a treasure, Mrs. Hogg explained.

Miss Hogg told her parents of the happy time she had had in Paris, and of her meeting with the Rev. Mr. Brownlow on board the French steamer, and she informed them that he was coming the next day to dinner.

Her father smiled and said, "I thought it was a lord that you were going to bring me for a son-in-law, and now you tell me that it is a minister that you have caught. Well, you will never be my lady."

"O, my heart, who can tell? He might become a bishop; then he would be my lord bishop, and of course I would be Lady Brownlow," Miss Hogg said laughingly. "But, you see, dad, I 'm not married yet; I 'm in no hurry to leave you and ma."

"That 's a good girl," said her father, patting her lovingly on the head. "Whenever you do marry, I shall miss you, my dear."

"Yes, that we will," said her mother.

"And so will I," said Isabelle; and every one laughed merrily at the thought that Isabelle would miss so terribly Miss Hogg, whom she had only known a few months. The little girl hid her face in Miss Hogg's neck, saying, "I have known you long enough to love you, Mamie, and I ain't forgot that you said to mamma, 'Take the fair one; she will be lovely.' "

"You dear little goose, I don't deserve your gratitude. I love you, but ma loves you best, dear; and she is better than I am; yes, far better," she repeated, thinking of her unworthy motives for choosing a fair child.

The next day the Rev. Mr. Brownlow came at the appointed time, and was received by Mrs. Hogg, who experienced a strange and unpleasant feeling as she shook hands with him; she felt as if she had met him before under strange and unpleasant circumstances, but as she looked at him she could not say that she had seen him before; it must be a resemblance; that 's it; he reminded her of the detective who had annoyed her so much about Isabelle. Well, perhaps it was his brother; she would ask him in time.

As for Walgrave, he felt far from comfortable under Mrs. Hogg's frank, innocent eyes. Strange, he thought,

Miss Hogg and Katy, with all their cunning had not recognized him, and simple, honest Mrs. Hogg had done so almost at first sight; she seemed to feel that he was sailing under false colors; he saw at a glance that she disliked him and he felt sorry, for it would make it harder for him to gain her consent to his marriage with her daughter, and he wondered how the father would receive him. Mrs. Hogg invited him to be seated, saying that her daughter had spoken of him and that she felt honored at his first visit, and was sure that her husband would enjoy his company, though he was not of the same religious belief as himself, for Mr. Hogg and Mamie were Catholics, while she had come from a family of Puritans, almost the first who had come to America for their religion's sake; still, for the sake of peace, she often went to the Catholic church.

The Rev. Mr. Brownlow said that he felt delighted at having made her acquaintance and thanked her for her kind welcome and confidence, saying that he would be careful not to hurt Mr. Hogg's feelings by referring to the difference in their religious views; he certainly exerted himself to please, and he partially succeeded. The cloud of uneasiness left Mrs. Hogg's kindly face, and when Mamie came in, dressed to kill, she found her mother and Brownlow talking like old friends; her eyes flashed and she smiled. Walgrave thought that it was the pleasure of seeing him there that brought that smile, and, rising, he held out his hand and pressed hers tenderly. Then Mr. Hogg came in and was introduced by his daughter to the Rev. Sidney Brownlow.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Brownlow, though I guess it 's not exactly me that you 've come after, eh, old chap?" giving the reverend gentleman a slap on the shoulder that nearly floored him.

"Papa," said Miss Hogg, "English people don't understand our ways, you know."

"Indeed, my girl, he seems to have understood yours or he would n't be here. Don't you think your old dad knows how many blue beans make five?"

The Rev. Mr. Brownlow hardly knew what to reply to such plain speaking. He looked at Miss Hogg, expecting to see her the picture of embarrassment and shyness; but as she met his eyes she burst into a loud laugh that would have

opened his eyes as to her sentiments towards him had he not been so much in love with her himself. He thought she was trying to make it appear that her father was joking, and he replied that anyone having enjoyed the pleasure of Miss Hogg's company for eight days, as he had, could not very well help calling on her family, and that he feared that he would not be the only one to do so; still, he did not feel at his ease; he did not like to be appropriated by Mr. Hogg.

Men are strange beings; they say they love a girl to desperation; would give their very life to possess her, and if she or her parents consent at the very first asking, the young girl loses value in her lover's eyes; yet, it is frank and honest in the young girl if she loves the young man who proposes to her. How can she pain him by a refusal? Yet many have refused for fear of being thought unmaidenly, or because they were not sure of the man's sincerity, thinking, "If he really loves me he will not take no for an answer; he will ask me again." Some men do, because they can see whether a girl loves them or not, but a conceited fool does not; his false pride is hurt and he almost hates the girl whom a few moments before he professed to love, and will rush away indignant at his treatment, calling the girl a coquette, and, banging the door after him, will go straightway to another, less reserved, who accepts him before his anger has had time to cool, knowing all the time that he loves another and must have quarreled with her; and so unhappy marriages are made.

Had the young man returned after banging the door, ten chances to one he would have found the girl who had refused him so timidly, crying her eyes out and breaking her heart because he had taken her at her word, and listening for every footstep in hope of his return. Men are strange animals, and hard to manage. Still, I would say here, be frank; if you love, own it modestly, shyly; don't deny it if it be honest, pure, holy love; and if the man is honest and pure-minded he will not misjudge you whom he has wished to make his partner for life, for it is the greatest compliment a man can pay a woman to make her an offer of marriage, to choose her among all others to be all in all to him, offering her his love, his protection, his very life. Such an offer should not be treated lightly, even

when it cannot be accepted. Refuse kindly, not proudly; think of his feelings, his heartache, and pity him. Do not laugh because you don't love him and cannot feel the pain that he does. Never lead a man to propose for the mere pleasure of refusing him. A true, virtuous woman feels sorrow at having to refuse, not joy. And remember that the time may come when the one you love will turn away from you saying, "She has no heart; she has led so many on for the sole purpose of having the satisfaction of refusing them." Then you will understand what a heartache is.

CHAPTER XLVII.

WALGRAVE loved Miss Hogg, and yet found fault with her father for not making it hard for him to win her. Mrs. Hogg came to the rescue by saying, "Mr. Brownlow, please don't take my husband's words seriously; he is not in such a hurry to part with his daughter as he would lead you to believe."

And Walgrave's mind leaned quite the other way; he now feared that Mr. Hogg had been laughing at him and had no intention of giving him his daughter; and Miss Hogg became dearer to him than ever; he felt that he could not live without her. A moment ago he had feared that she was going to be thrown at his head. Such is man. Walgrave replied, "Certainly, madam, and I don't wonder that you have no wish to part with your lovely daughter."

"O, never mind my lovely self," said Miss Hogg, laughing. "Let us all go to dinner. This is the second bell, you know, ma."

"Is it, my dear?"

"Yes, and I'm as hungry as a Turk."

"My dear," said her mother, "you might express yourself a little less strongly."

"Well, is n't it right to say that one is hungry when the dinner is ready? I think that it is paying it a great compliment, for what is it made for if not to eat, and how can we eat it unless we 're hungry?" And, turning to Walgrave, she said, "Mr. Brownlow, please give your arm to my mother; you two will agree, I know; and I'll take my old dad's arm; he has n't had me for so long." The old man smiled at his daughter, well pleased that she had given him the preference.

The dinner was good and it was enjoyed by all—that is, it was all good except the turkey stuffing, which seemed to Walgrave to have been made with potatoes, onions, and unstoned raisins. He did all he possibly could to swallow a few mouthfuls of it, but he found it hard work. Not so, however, with Miss Hogg and her parents, who seemed to

enjoy it immensely. Walgrave was very fond of stuffing as made in England; bread crumbs soaked in milk, plenty of butter, eggs, parsley, finely chopped onions, pepper and salt, all well mixed with a few handfuls of the best flour and baking powder, and well cooked. England is the place for good stuffings and good puddings.

Rev. Mr. Brownlow became a frequent caller, and was often seen riding with Miss Hogg; in fact, all her acquaintances thought she was engaged to him, and he seemed to be growing younger every day. He had sounded Mr. Hogg in regard to gaining his consent should he be happy enough to win his daughter's affection, and he had answered that he would never stand in the way of his "gal's" happiness; that he would have preferred a man with plenty of money, or a title, but that if Mamie loved him he would not say no; that he had money enough for both, and that he would be ready to give his daughter one hundred thousand dollars on her wedding day.

Walgrave was proud, and he really loved Miss Hogg for herself, and not for her money, and he said so, and added: "I am not rich, still I have enough to live on without depending on my wife. I have five hundred pounds a year and whatever my calling brings me in, which is nearly as much again."

"But you have no church," said Mr. Hogg.

"Not here, certainly; but I have in England; and my pay goes on while I am here."

It is true his detective pay was going on, but was he earning it? Was he going to play Lady Montgomery false and drop the case? No, he was too honorable to act falsely in a case that he had undertaken; and in marrying Miss Hogg he hoped soon to be able to return Lady Florence to her aunt. After their marriage he would tell his wife that he knew she had Lady Florence in hiding, and he would beg of her to allow him to return her to her people; that he would manage the business without compromising her; he would not even accept the reward that had been offered; and she would consent, for she loved him, and could never enjoy peace of mind until she had returned the child, nor could he, himself, be happy knowing that his wife had abducted her. That would be his first work after marriage. Then for a life of peace and joy with the woman he loved.

Those were his plans. No wonder that he was looking so young and happy.

If Miss Hogg had only loved him, all this would have come to pass; but, unfortunately for poor Walgrave, she did not, and he was soon to awaken to the terrible reality that he had given his whole heart to, and built his happiness on, a heartless, unscrupulous woman, who could play with his best affections and enjoy his sufferings. She, never having truly loved, could not understand her cruel work; it was all fun to her, but death to Walgrave. His love was true, sincere, and pure, for he was an honorable man, and his life would be wrecked. His love was so strong, that no matter what Miss Hogg did to him he would love her still; yes, as long as life lasted. He, who seemed so near happiness, was to have the cup dashed from his lips when he least expected it, and by the hand of the woman he loved so passionately and truly.

He had been in New York three months and it was arranged that Miss Hogg's parents were to give a grand ball to celebrate their daughter's engagement to the Rev. Sidney Brownlow of London, and to introduce him to their friends. A happier man than Walgrave could not be found in New York. He resolved to hasten the wedding after the party. He had often written to headquarters, Scotland Yard, in London, that he had seen nothing suspicious in Miss Hogg's conduct, but that he had a clew and hoped that in a few months he would be able to tell them where they could find the child; but he did not say one word about his marriage to Miss Hogg. No one knew under what name or in what disguise he had left Havre; he would tell them when everything was over, and would then resign from the detective bureau, unless his wife wished him to continue his present calling, for he intended to please her in all things. He was a true Englishman; a true gentleman; a man to make a woman with a heart happy; though a detective, he was refined in manner and speech, of kindly nature, respectful to all womankind. There is no man in the world like an English gentleman to make a woman happy—a refined, loving, ladylike woman, I mean.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

At last the evening of the party arrived. The Rev. Sidney Brownlow was to be recognized and presented as the accepted lover of the great heiress. Some, I may say many, were surprised that Miss Hogg had not looked higher, and chosen a younger man. True, he was a gentleman, and seemed to adore her; there was no mistaking the fact.

Miss Hogg must have been very fond of her intended and very proud of him to have invited so many people to meet him. She wore a deep red satin dress with overskirt of black lace, a bunch of white roses at her breast and one in her hair; a necklace and bracelet of diamonds, red slippers with diamond buckles; her strong, white arms were bare; her neck also was bare, and sparkling with diamonds. She looked well, though perhaps a little overdressed for a young girl. Her mother had proposed a white dress with pearl ornaments and pink roses at her breast and in her hair; but she had refused, saying that that was too girlish and innocent for her, at which her mother had looked surprised and had said, "Really, to hear you talk, Mamie, one would take you to be a widow, and not a young maiden."

"O, well, please don't bother; I know what I 'm about, and by and by you 'll say that I was right."

The Rev. Mr. Brownlow arrived early, looking the picture of happiness in his new black suit and white choker; he wore a red and a white rose in his buttonhole, for Miss Hogg had insisted that he should wear her colors, and her wishes were law to him. All agreed that they never had seen a man so much in love as this reverend gentleman was, and every one prophesied that Miss Hogg would lead him a life.

Mrs. Hogg was dressed in plain black satin, with white lace at her throat and wrists, a knot of mauve colored ribbon at her neck and the same in her white lace cap. A diamond brooch was her only ornament, except a solitaire ring on her finger above her wedding ring.

As for Mr. Hogg, he was all life and importance, with

his cutaway coat, white waistcoat, heavy gold chain, with half a dozen trinkets hanging far below the waistcoat, his fingers covered with rings of all the colors of the rainbow, and his bald head shining like ivory. He walked about the room in a pompous manner, with his hands behind him, and again, with his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat, his coat well thrown back, displaying all his jewelry to the greatest advantage. Every one could see that he was somebody.

When all the guests were assembled he took the arm of the Rev. Mr. Brownlow and introduced him to his friends as his future son-in-law, and many jokes were made and much slang used, which puzzled the reverend gentleman not a little; and he promised himself to take his wife to England as soon as possible after their marriage.

The back parlor had been arranged for dancing; the folding doors were opened, so that those who preferred to remain in the front parlor, playing cards or conversing, could see the dancers without being with them. The Rev. Mr. Brownlow remained in the drawing-room talking to his future mother-in-law and some other old people. When asked if he would not open the ball with his future wife he replied that it would not be seemly for him to dance, but that he would be most happy to see Miss Hogg enjoy herself with some other partner, which she did with a will, seating herself now and then by the side of her intended so that he might not feel that she was neglecting him. Everything was satisfactory to every one. There was plenty to drink, both strong and mild, and ice cream and dainties at the *buffet,* and many were not slow in finding their way there, and were becoming flushed, excited, and even quarrelsome.

Mr. Hogg was jolly; the wine and brandy made him merry; others it had made sad and morose; he went among the young ladies, chucking them under the chin, giving them ice cream, and actually danced with one, and became so excited and rapid in his movements that he came in contact with another couple with such violence that all four fell in a heap, to the great amusement of those who were not in the collision. Some high words were exchanged which hardly sounded aristocratic. Then peace was

restored, more drink imbibed, and Walgrave thought to himself there will be trouble before the night is over.

At last supper was announced and the guests paired off, the Rev. Mr. Brownlow with Miss Hogg at his right. When, after a great deal of pushing and talking, all were seated, Miss Hogg stretched forth her white arm in a commanding manner.

"Before we begin I should like to say a few words. You are all aware that I am engaged to marry the Rev. Mr. Brownlow."

"Yes, yes," was the answer all around. Everybody was surprised at Miss Hogg's words, for it is not customary for young girls to make speeches at their engagement feast. Walgrave began to feel uneasy. What was she going to say? He loved her dearly, still, he thought she was rather too forward for a young lady. Miss Hogg waited a moment and then continued, with her eyes flashing with triumph, her head thrown back:

"Well, my friends, this man is not the Rev. Mr. Brownlow, but Detective Walgrave," and her voice sounded loud and clear. "He has come here disguised to make trouble in our house; he annoyed us greatly while we were in London, and he has followed us here for the same purpose."

Walgrave had turned as white as a sheet, the blow was so unexpected; he placed his right hand on the back of a chair to support himself, and looked reproachfully at Miss Hogg.

"What do you say, my girl? What 's the meaning of all this?" said her father. "That man has annoyed you and has come here to worry you under false pretenses for the sake of your money?"

"I deny it," said Walgrave. "I wanted to marry your daughter because I loved her, not because of her money."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Miss Hogg. "Do you deny also that your name is Walgrave and that you are a detective, and is not this badge yours?" putting the badge on the table in front of him.

Poor Walgrave was dumfounded; he could not justify himself before all these people; he felt that he was in a false position and would not be believed; there was too much truth in what Miss Hogg had said; so he remained silent while many voices were raised in anger and even threats.

Mrs. Hogg was pale and trembling, and she murmured, "That man is determined to take my Isabelle from me. Why should he persist in thinking that she is that lady's niece? I was beginning to like him, for I thought he loved Mamie."

"And I do, with all my heart," replied Walgrave, who had heard her words, "nor did I intend taking Isabelle from you; I am satisfied that she is yours, Mrs. Hogg."

Many of the men had approached Walgrave with a threatening air, but Miss Hogg said, in a loud voice, "Stop, all of you; this is my business, not yours; I can fight my own battle. Now, Mr. Walgrave, I have unmasked you and exposed you, as you deserve, so go; leave us, and never cross my path again."

Poor Walgrave, looking broken-hearted and ten years older, looked up at her, saying, "O, Miss Hogg, Mamie, my only love, how could you? I loved you with all my heart and soul, and shall ever do so."

"You had better think of revenge, and get even with me," replied Miss Hogg, with a laugh.

"Never, Mamie; I shall never be a detective again," said poor Walgrave, looking at her with tears in his sorrowful eyes; and he walked toward the door murmuring, "O, how could she be so cruel? I loved her so; she was my life; now everything is dark before me." He descended the stairs; he heard the company laughing, and Miss Hogg loudest of all. How he reached the street he hardly knew; he was dazed; his heart ached terribly and his head was on fire. To have lost the woman he loved, and be exposed as a cheat, a fortune-hunter, before all these people! O, she had taken a terrible revenge! And yet he could not hate her; no, he still loved her. He went to his hotel, retired, but not to sleep, for he felt as if he could never sleep again; his heart was broken; great, dry sobs escaped him as he paced the floor. Then, seating himself at the table, he buried his face in his hands and sobbed aloud; he shook all over; it was a pitiful sight.

Poor Walgrave is not the only one who has been condemned to much suffering by a heartless coquette. He had given his whole heart and soul to Miss Hogg, thinking that she loved him, and she had heaped shame and insults upon him. O, was it possible? Was he dreaming? O, would

to God he were! But he still seemed to hear the cruel laughter as he went down. "O, Mamie, Mamie, my hope, my life, my lost love! I loved you more than I did my dear young wife whom I lost nine years ago. O, that terrible wreck when I saw my dear one go down in the cruel waves near the Isle of Wight and I was powerless to save her, held as I was by strong arms from rushing to certain death!—for she had disappeared, and I could n't swim. Would that they had allowed me to seek death with my Bella! And to think that I loved Mamie better than I did my pure young wife of a year! O, it is a punishment upon me! Was I born to endure a lonely life, never to have a true home as other men have, with a loving wife and dear little children around me? Yet, I was true to you, Bella, all through those years, and have mourned you sincerely. I could not speak of my great sorrow, and I allowed people to think that I was a bachelor. And after so long a time hope and joy had again come into my heart and I felt young again. O, the happiness of the past three months was paradise to me! I had never dreamed of such joy. O, Mamie, Mamie, my all! I love you still, and it was you who struck the blow which crushed my heart, my honor, my prospects in life. I have lost, not only you, but the confidence and respect of my superiors, and my own self respect. No one will believe me when I say I loved Miss Hogg and was not marrying her for her money. Every one will think I have betrayed the trust confided to me to search for Lady Florence, and was trying to gain the heiress for my wife, under false pretenses, false name, false respectability, intending to hide her crime. Ah, me! the dishonor is great and undeserved, for, as God is my judge, my first act after marriage would have been to send Lady Florence back to her aunt; but no one will believe me now; nor can I explain what my intention was without betraying Mamie, and that I cannot do; no, never! I would give my life to make her happy; and when she is found out, as she must eventually be, it will add to my sorrow. O, Mamie, could you not see how truly I loved you? All this sorrow is your work, and you could laugh at my broken heart. I hear your laughter still."

Bitter sobs escaped him. It is terrible to witness the tears of a true-hearted, honorable man like Walgrave, for

such men do not weep every day; and it is no wonder that after a night spent in such agony of mind he looked ten years older than he did the evening before. He looked at himself, saw the change, and said to himself, "What does it matter? My life is over."

He prepared to leave the hotel, as he well knew that an account of the scene enacted the night before would soon reach there, and probably would soon be in the newspapers. All New York would be discussing it, so he left the hotel, intending to leave New York by the first steamer. On his way he entered a restaurant and called for breakfast; he would look at the paper for the departure of steamers, and as he opened it the first thing that met his eyes was this in large print: "Great Sensation Among the Four Hundred. The party given by the well known heiress, Miss Mamie Hogg, last night, to introduce her betrothed, the Rev. Sidney Brownlow, ended in disaster. The reverend gentleman proved to be the clever English detective, Henry Walgrave, who, it seems, thought it more profitable to make love to the heiress than to hunt rogues. Our American heiresses are often accused of running after Englishmen, but in this case the tables are turned; it was the Englishman who ran after our heiress, and was rightly punished for his presumption. Miss Hogg is a high-spirited young lady, and when she discovered that her intended was not what he represented himself to be, she unmasked him, and right royally too. It seems that she had known of his duplicity for some time, and had given this feast in order to crush him more effectually. The gentleman had nothing to say, and soon sneaked out."

Poor Walgrave could read no more; he was indeed crushed. How much more was said about him he never knew; but there were three columns on the subject. As many Americans may still remember, it was the talk of New York and Brooklyn, and the papers were in great demand.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE news reached England before Walgrave did, and when he presented himself at Scotland Yard his chief hardly knew him; he looked an old man; no longer proud and erect, but with bent head. He said, "Captain, I wish to resign."

"It 's well you do," was the captain's answer. "You show yourself to be clever still by resigning before I have a chance to dismiss you. What have you to say in your defense?"

"Nothing, captain; I can't explain."

"Then what the papers say is true. I am surprised, I am shocked, Mr. Walgrave, that you, whom we always called one of our best men, should have betrayed a trust. Surely it cannot be; you can explain."

"I don't know, nor do I wish to know, all that the papers are saying about me. I am sorry not to be able to retire from the service with your good opinion and with honor, but I cannot explain. All I can say is that what I did I did for the best, and I have failed. If I had succeeded you would have approved of my conduct. Look at me, captain; do I look as if I had been enjoying myself?"

The captain did look at him; in fact, he had already noted the great change in Walgrave. He had left them comparatively a young man, and now no one could have called him even a middle-aged man; he was bent and looked broken.

"I can't make you out, Walgrave," said the captain, after a moment; "you have suffered, I can see that; and I believe that if you were so disposed you could clear both yourself and Mathew. Why will you not do so?"

"I cannot, captain; pray, don't ask me."

He left the office and went to his rooms to remain until he could determine where to go, for he would leave London soon for some retired spot where he would be alone with his sad thoughts.

The next day Walgrave heard a well known step on the

stairs, and soon a knock at his door, which opened almost at the same time, and Mathew was before him; but as he looked at Walgrave he stood still, and a look of surprise and real sorrow came into his eyes. Then he came forward and held out his hand, which Walgrave took feebly.

"I 'm sorry to see you look so ill," said Mathew. "Cheer up, don't give way like that; we 'll yet get that she devil, Miss Hogg. Don't think for a moment that I believe what they say about you in the papers. I know her; it 's some of her tricks. You in love with her, and wanting to marry her—the brazen baggage! How dare she assert such a thing?"

"Don't, Matthew; pray don't abuse her."

"What!" cried Mathew, jumping up from his chair, "are you mad? O, she must have bewitched you! But wait. I 'm going to hunt her up; I 'm not in love with her; I defy her to bewitch me, and when I get her in my power I 'll show her no mercy."

"Mathew, Mathew, remember that I love her."

"But, Mr. Walgrave, she must have worked a charm on you. A clever, honorable man like you, to fall in love at the age of forty for the first time, and with a person of Miss Hogg's caliber! I can't make it out, for I know that her money could n't tempt you; I know you too well for that."

"Thank you, my friend; but this is not the first time I have loved." And he told the surprised Mathew of his young wife, who had gone down in the Jersey packet commanded by Captain Goodridge, who had himself gone down with about twenty of his crew and a few passengers. The brave old captain wanted every passenger to leave the sinking ship, which had struck on the rocks near the Needles. All the boats were lowered and there was a rush for them, but the captain's orders were that all the women and children should go first. Walgrave had hurried his young wife into one of the boats, telling her, as he embraced her, to cheer up, he would soon rejoin her, and from the deck he had watched the boat as far as he was able to see, for the fog was thick. Suddenly a terrible cry was heard; the boat had upset, and all in it were seen struggling in the water. For a moment Walgrave had seen his beloved wife, then she had gone down. He rushed to the side of the sinking steamer and would have jumped overboard, but

the first officer grabbed him by the arm, saying, "Can you swim?" "No, but I must go to her," was his answer; but the officer held him back, saying, "It is too late; she has sunk." Many of those who were struggling in the water were picked up. Mrs. Walgrave was never found. The boats, after taking all the passengers to a place of safety, returned with other boats, for the brave captain and crew; they hunted in the fog, but to no purpose; the steamer had gone down with all the brave men on board. A monument has since been erected to their memory, on the pier—the Victoria pier—in the Island of Jersey, and it can yet be seen there recording those facts.

When Mathew had heard Walgrave's story he felt sorry for him. Still he could not understand that having been faithful to his wife's memory for so many years he should have fallen so desperately in love with Miss Hogg, and he told him so.

"Don't say a word more about Miss Hogg. I shall always love her; I can't help it."

"And what are you going to do now?" asked Mathew.

"I think I shall go and live in the suburbs of Southampton, facing the Isle of Wight, near where my first love was lost; perhaps that will drive this mad love from my heart. I will at least have quiet there; no, no happiness, my boy, that can never be."

Mathew left him, thanking him for the confidence he had placed in him, and he determined to hunt Miss Hogg without mercy, whatever Walgrave might say.

A few days later Walgrave had left London for Southampton, and after some trouble he found a small cottage by the sea. It will seem a strange whim for him to go to so lonely a spot to nurse his troubles, old and new; but he had given up all hopes of happiness in this world, and was only waiting for death, never expecting that brighter days would come for him, and that his first and his last love would join hands, figuratively speaking, and fill his heart with pure, holy love. The ways of God are mysterious; everything worketh for our good; if we could only see it in that light our sorrows would be less heavy to bear; but poor humanity is weak, and when we are not allowed to find happiness in our own way we give up

hope and see only the dark clouds that surround us; we will not look for the silver lining.

Walgrave at this time believed it impossible for him ever to know or enjoy another day of happiness; but time will show, and in what beautiful shape it will come to him, and how he will bless and thank God for the great gift.

Mathew resolved to begin again the search for Lady Florence. Miss Hogg had not taken her to America. Walgrave had said during their conversation that he had seen nothing suspicious in her conduct, and that the child must be somewhere at some school; that was his belief, and Mathew had agreed with him; still, for eight months they had searched for the missing girl, and they were no more advanced to-day than they were the very first day, and were less hopeful.

Mathew left for France once more and secured the aid of M. Robert; they visited every convent and every boarding school in France, leaving in each a picture of the child, and orders to communicate with either of them should she be brought to their school. They then visited Belgium and Germany, but no trace of the child could be found. Mathew returned disheartened; he reported what had been done, and Lord and Lady Montgomery agreed that they could not have done more, and that perhaps, after all, Miss Hogg had had nothing to do with it, and that they had all been working on the wrong tack; some showman or circus man had gotten her. Mathew knew better, but as he had failed to prove Miss Hogg guilty he only said, "I will keep my eyes open and report to you at once should I find a clew." He received a large sum of money for expenses and departed, leaving Lady Montgomery and her son almost heartbroken, for they were losing hope of ever seeing the child again. More than eighteen months had elapsed since that dreadful night of her disappearance, when they paid Mathew and lost hope.

CHAPTER L.

WHAT had become of Lady Florence during this long period? We left her boarding a steamer for Germany with Mrs. Jerry, who, on arriving at Hamburg, went into private lodgings and waited for further orders—her letter giving her no other directions. But some days later she received another letter, from her son, saying that he was at Liverpool and would leave for New York in one of the packets as a poor seaman, and work his passage,—no one would look for him there; and that Miss Hogg had given him a letter for her and had asked him to write to her and tell her to leave Germany for Italy, and that she was to employ a governess for the young lady, as she feared to send her to school for the present, and that she must act with great caution; that Miss Hogg dare not act herself, for the detectives were watching her, and should any of her letters fall into their hands they would all be lost.

Mrs. Jerry, under the name of Mrs. Martin, soon took her departure for Italy, and on the way there made the acquaintance of the Countess de Pascalina, who greatly admired the little girl, and when told by Mrs. Martin that they intended to remain in Italy long enough to learn the language the countess said, "We have fine schools; which one is she to attend?"

"I don't know yet," replied Mrs. Martin, not wishing to say too much on so short an acquaintance with the countess.

"May I recommend you one? I am well acquainted with the superioress of La Madonna Maria."

"Well, madam," said Mrs. Martin, "I hardly know what to say; if I place this young lady in a convent and anything should happen to her it would kill her parents. My mistress told me not to allow her out of my sight for a moment, and I have been thinking that if I could find a nice suite of apartments somewhere in the suburbs I might employ a governess and masters for her and then I could watch over her."

"That 's a very good plan," said the countess, "but very expensive."

"O, her parents are rich, and she is an only child; they will not mind the expense so long as she gets a good education and comes back to them safe."

The Countess de Pascalina reflected a few moments, looking admiringly at the child. She had no children of her own; she was a widow living a rather retired life at her chateau near the beautiful city of Naples. She said, "Since you have nothing settled I have a proposition to make to you. My chateau is large, and since I lost my dear husband, the Count de Pascalina, I have lived a secluded life; I see but few people, but those who visit me are of the best families in Italy. As I have taken a great liking to your charge, we may make some arrangement that will be advantageous to both parties. I propose that you and the young lady come home with me, say on a visit for a week, and should you like my home, we will make arrangements for you to stay. It will certainly be very advantageous for your charge, who will have an opportunity to mingle with the aristocracy of Italy, and learn to speak the pure, perfect Italian language. I am not rich, though of noble family; my father was the Count de Farina, and my late husband the Count de Pascalina; and if I could add to my income in a way that would not disgrace our noble name I would do it, should you approve of my terms, which will be easy, for I have taken quite a fancy to Isabelle."

"You are very kind," said Mrs. Martin, rejoicing at the turn the affair was taking. She certainly would accept the countess's offer, whatever price she asked, for no one would look for Lady Florence in the chateau of the Countess de Pascalina; she said, "If your price is at all within my means, but I"—

"Not at all, Mrs. Martin; after you have seen my home, make inquiries and find out what a suite of rooms in a respectable house would cost you—board and lodgings—and my price will be the same. What do you say to my offer?"

"I think I will accept it with thanks, madam; you will understand better than I how to choose her governess and masters, and I will write to my mistress and tell her

how lucky I have been in finding a home for Miss Isabelle in a chateau, and having her treated as an equal by the Countess de Pascalina, for of course you will so treat her, will you not?"

"Certainly, that is my intention. I love the child, and her people must have good blood, for she is a perfect lady."

"No better blood in all England, madam," replied Mrs. Martin, truthfully. "But won't your friends look down on her when they learn that she is only your lodger?"

"O, Sancta Maria, what are you saying? I don't intend that my friends shall know that she is my lodger; it would be better for all that they should believe her to be a relation of mine—the daughter of a cousin of mine who married an Englishman—and that would account for her being so fair. No one would dare to doubt my word."

"Certainly not, madam, and it would make it more comfortable for Miss Isabelle, and she will not disgrace you; and, as for myself, I will be her nurse, lady's maid, and anything else that you wish me to be as long as my young lady is happy."

"Well, then, you come with me now to my chateau just as if I had brought you back with me from England."

And so matters had been arranged, and Lady Florence had been residing ever since with the Countess de Pascalina as her cousin, and mingled with the *noblesse* of Italy, and she could speak the language to perfection in all its soft purity. The countess loved her dearly, and the child returned her affection sincerely. Mrs. Martin was also happy so far as comfort went, though she often wished that she could see her son.

CHAPTER LI.

Two years passed away. Miss Hogg was again in England accompanied by her sister Isabelle de Courtney and some American friends. Isabelle had grown to be a lovely young girl of more than ten years, tall for her age; her hair reached her waist, and curled beautifully. Mamie was proud of her, and had coaxed her mother to be allowed to take her with her and leave her at school in Paris, so that she might learn to speak the French language correctly. Mrs. Hogg would have preferred to keep Isabelle with her, but, as she said, Mamie was headstrong and imperious and for the sake of peace she had allowed the child to go, though she would miss her dreadfully, and Mamie must bring her back if she kept on feeling lonely.

Katy, though married, still lived with Miss Hogg. She had married Jerry, and though still full of fun she had tamed down considerably, and would have preferred to remain behind, for she feared that Miss Hogg would get her into trouble sooner or later. Had Jerry been one of the party Katy would have gone more willingly, but to part with her husband was hard for her, for they loved each other dearly; but Jerry reminded her of what they owed to Miss Hogg, for she had been very kind to them both, and had promised either to bring back Mrs. Jerry or send her to America as soon as possible. So Miss Hogg, Isabelle, and Katy had left New York, and Jerry had remained behind. Mrs. Hogg had had enough of England and France and preferred to stay at home. She made Mamie swear not to give up Isabelle to anyone.

"Well, I like that!" Miss Hogg had said. "Who would dare to claim her? She 's ours, so don't fret, ma; we 'll leave her in France for a year or so, so that she can learn to speak French and be a credit to us. Don't you remember what blunders you and I made when we were there? O, my heart, what fools we looked!"

"I really wish you would select your words when speaking to your mother. I don't think we looked any more like

fools than any other people who did n't understand the language. If you had n't got into such a passion as you often did we would not have been noticed."

"Well, perhaps you 're right, ma, and when I go there again I 'll be on my guard; try to drop all my American slang and never get angry."

"I wish you could, Mamie; and don't go and force your company on any of those English lords."

"No, ma," answered Mamie, blushing at the recollection of what had happened at Lady Montgomery's mansion.

"And don't bring any more English detectives here as you did last time. I often think of that poor Mr. Brownlow—I mean Walgrave—and somehow I pity him, for I know what love is, and I 'm sure that he loved you truly."

"Well, if he did, do you mean to say that you wish I had married him?"

"No, my dear; but you should not have encouraged him to that extent. I can't understand you; you will be twenty-four on your next birthday and you have never yet truly loved anyone."

"Well, I don't know, ma; I have liked a great many men; even that Walgrave I had a liking for before I found him out."

"O, a liking is not love, my dear; and be careful that you don't fall in love with some one in England—I mean some one who may not be willing to return your love."

"I will, ma; in fact I don't think that I shall ever marry; I like my freedom too much. I could never bear to have any man boss me; I think I would knock him down if he tried it."

"Not if you loved him, my dear."

"Well, perhaps not."

And so they parted. Mrs. Hogg waving her handkerchief, standing on the pier, to her daughter and to Isabelle, whom she loved just as much as she did her own daughter, and with whom she agreed better, as Isabelle was of a more gentle nature.

The steamer arrived safely in Liverpool, and Miss Hogg and party left the next morning for London, stopping at the Victoria Hotel. She could not bear to go to the

Temperance Hotel after what had happened there nearly two years ago. She had no wish to revive the scandal, especially as she had Isabelle with her, and as she really had come more to see Lady Florence than to place Isabelle at school she must be careful.

Mathew soon learned that Miss Hogg had arrived in London, and he managed to see her and Isabelle without being seen by her. The great beauty of the little girl struck him. If she was the one he had seen at Richmond she had certainly changed for the better. What lovely long golden hair! He could really not decide if she was the child he had seen there. So he called on Lord Montgomery and made his report, and Lord Montgomery said that he himself would call on Miss Hogg and see the young lady.

Miss Hogg was certainly surprised to receive Lord Montgomery's card on the afternoon of the third day of her arrival. Yes, she would see him, she said to the servant, and he walked in, looking handsomer than ever, for two years had improved him; he was taller, stouter, and more manly. Miss Hogg's heart beat, and for a moment her hopes returned. If she told him where his cousin was would he forgive her, would he consent to marry her? She would sound him. Rising from her chair, she held out her hand to him, saying, "I am glad to see you, Lord Montgomery, though a little surprised;" but Lord Montgomery did not take her extended hand; he simply bowed, and Miss Hogg's anger knew no bounds; her face flushed and her dark eyes flashed; she felt humiliated to the last degree, vowed vengeance in her heart, and, dropping into the seat again, she said, with less anger than might have been expected, for she remembered her mother's words and tried hard to keep down her temper:

"Well, my lord, as apparently you have not come here to make me a friendly visit, will you kindly state your business; take a chair, if you will, and, if not, I hope you won't expect me to stand also, for I don't intend to do it."

"Miss Hogg," said Lord Montgomery, placing his hand on the back of a chair, "I have come in my mother's name, in my own name, to plead with you and to ask you to

return Lady Florence to us if you really did take her away; no steps will be taken against you or against anyone who may have helped you in the abduction, I pledge you my word of honor; and if you did it in a moment of anger at the supposed wrong we did you, surely our two long years of anxiety ought to satisfy you. When I heard of your arrival a hope sprang into my heart that you were bringing her back to us; was I mistaken, Miss Hogg?"

He waited for an answer; it came hard and crushing:

"No; I have not brought your cousin back for the simple reason that I have n't got her. Are you going to have me followed and pestered as you did two years ago? I have my sister with me;" she rang the bell; "and you had better see her while you are here, for I will not have the child annoyed or frightened by your detectives."

The servant appeared and was sent for Isabelle, who soon came in, a vision of beauty and happiness; she went up to Miss Hogg, threw her arms around her neck, and, kissing her affectionately, said, "You want me, sister Mamie?"

"Yes, Isabelle;" and turning toward Lord Montgomery, she said, "Isabelle, you know this gentleman?"

The child had not noticed before that anyone was in the room, and she looked at Lord Montgomery in surprise, and then a rosy tint came into her fair cheeks, and she answered quietly, "Yes, it is the same gentleman who came with a lady who had lost her little girl and thought I was she. I hope she has found her by this time."

"No," said Lord Montgomery, sadly, and looking admiringly at the little girl, regretting that she was not Lady Florence—she was aristocratic enough to be; still, he was perfectly satisfied that she was not his cousin. "I wish we had found her, for we are very unhappy on her account."

Turning to Miss Hogg, he said, "You give me your word that you had nothing to do with her disappearance, Miss Hogg?"

"Certainly I do; how many times do you want to be told? What could I do with your cousin?"

Lord Montgomery bowed and left the room without another word. He certainly had not played his cards well with such a person as Miss Hogg, who had so little regard

for truth. Her word went for nothing. Lord Montgomery, as a gentleman, could not have acted in any other manner than he had done. Had he been a detective he would have taken Miss Hogg's proffered hand, and, by so doing, would have made a friend instead of an enemy. How could he expect her to tell him where his cousin was after that insult? And yet, after what had occurred he could not give her his hand; no honorable man could have done it; but had it been possible for him to do so the result would have been different, as in her mad hopes, for a moment she had believed it possible to make terms with him; she was not exactly in love with him, but he was so grand looking, and a lord to boot, that had he taken her hand and pressed it, and then sat down by her side, he would have had the happiness of seeing his cousin soon; she could not have resisted him. And then she was almost tired of hiding Lady Florence. But when he insulted her by refusing her hand the bitterness in her heart was great and she would rather have seen Lady Florence dead than to return her to her cousin that he might marry her some day. No, never should he see her again. How dare he refuse her hand! Had she thought of all that had passed between herself and Lord and Lady Montgomery she would never have offered her hand.

Poor Miss Hogg! Why was she not born a lady? Had she been one she would never have offered her hand to Lord Montgomery, and she would have been saved the bitter humiliation she had just gone through. She felt very much put out for some time; then she became calm and began to enjoy herself, attending parties, picnics, and theaters, and was very much admired. Isabelle often accompanied her to theaters and was also very much admired. Lady Montgomery had seen her and wondered who she could be. When told by her son of the great beauty a hope had come to her that it might be her niece, but as soon as she saw her she had to admit that it was not, but the child that they had already taken to be Lady Florence; so she came to the conclusion that after all Miss Hogg had not taken her, and that the detectives had been on the wrong track so long that the guilty parties had had time to make their escape.

Where was the dear child now? Perhaps in poverty;

perhaps dead or illtreated. O, it was terrible to be kept in suspense! It would be better to know that she was dead than to imagine her in all kinds of suffering with low and wicked people. Lady Montgomery knew no peace after their great loss. Her son also felt it deeply, and they were both beginning to despair; it was so long ago, and no clew had been found that led to anything but cruel disappointment.

Miss Hogg was not annoyed by detectives during her stay in London. Before leaving for Paris she called at the St. Pancras Home, saw the matron and asked her to hunt up the piece of fine linen in which Isabelle de Courtney had been wrapped when she was left there. The matron replied that there was no need to hunt for it, for it was on one of the shelves, well ticketed, and she gave it to Miss Hogg, who, in return, gave her a five dollar bill. When she was alone with Katy she examined the contents of the parcel, which proved to be a piece of fine cambric, seemingly from a nightdress, and near the hem was written in India ink "Isabelle de Courtney." Had it been written there as a mark for the linen or as a name to be given to the child—who could tell? A fine flannel petticoat was also in the parcel, and, when examined, it proved to be marked the same way on the waistband. Some one of the name of Isabelle de Courtney had worn these clothes, but how came the child to be wrapped up in them? It was a mystery which, so far, had not been solved; would it ever be? That remained to be seen. A thin, old black shawl, of common material, was also in the parcel. It could never have belonged to the same person as the nightdress and petticoat; it was puzzling, to say the least. Had the mother been murdered by the owner of the old shawl for the sake of money or jewelry? But no; for had that been so why not have murdered the child also instead of risking discovery by leaving her at the door of St. Pancras Church? And where was the father? Why had he not sought his child, and how came the wife to be in such a position as to be compelled to place her baby in a home, if she had done it, and if not, who had? That was the question; if that could be solved the rest would be easy, but how and what steps were to be taken to reach this much desired end they had no idea.

"Well," said Miss Hogg, "we are not much better off with these clothes than we were without them. What do you say, Katy?"

"As far as I can see we can do nothing for the present; but you must be careful to keep those clothes; it 's hard to say if in time they will not prove her birth; but I should n't think that you 'd be in a hurry to find out, for you might have to part with her. And, again, her birth may not be what you would wish her to know."

"O, bosh! if Isabelle is not well born no one ever was, so don't talk such trash; you ought to be ashamed of yourself. I tell you she will turn out some day to be a grand lady or my name is not Mamie Hogg, and, whoever her parents were or are, she will always love us. I do wish I could find out where she comes from. Put those things away, Katy, and be sure they don't get lost. Don't tell ma about them or it will set her to fretting for fear of losing Isabelle. We leave here to-morrow for Paris. I wonder if you will meet your sweetheart, Monsieur Robert."

"O, it won't matter much if I do," said Katy, laughing, "for I 'm a married woman now and can't flirt with anyone. I wonder what he would say if he knew I had married Thomas whom I seemed to hate so much, and that Thomas had discovered that he loved me when he, Robert, had stood him up on his head in the big trunk. Poor Jerry's love must have been low down to require such an operation to bring it up to his head."

And they both laughed at the recollection of those times.

"O, my heart, but we had high old times," replied Miss Hogg; "we are not likely to be troubled by detectives, the thing happened so long ago and Lady Montgomery no longer suspects me, so that we shall be pretty dull, I 'm afraid."

"O, well, I should smile! How you talk, Mamie, when you know well that Mathew knows that it was you who took Florence and had her sent to the Ursuline Convent at Antwerp. Did n't Robert hear us talk about it in Mrs. Jerry's room, when he was listening at the door, as Jerry heard him tell Mathew afterwards?"

"Yes, yes; I had almost forgotten. Well, we shall have to be on our guard, that 's all."

"Do you really intend to put Miss Isabelle to school in Paris?"

"Of course I do; she will run no risk; why do you ask?"

"Because I thought you intended to put the other young lady there, and that you had taken Miss Isabelle as a blind."

"O, no; I intend Isabelle to remain at school in Paris for at least a year; then another year in Germany; that will be my excuse for coming to Europe, for I want to see Lady Florence often; but I will leave her under the protection of the Countess de Pascalina; no one will look for her there."

"But, Mamie, what will you do with her when she is grown up?"

"O, don't bother," replied Miss Hogg, losing her temper at the recollection of the new insult she had received from Lord Montgomery, about which Katy knew nothing, so she was surprised to see her flare up for no reason that she could see. "You really provoke me, Katy," she continued more calmly; "there 's plenty of time to consider the matter; she is not eleven yet. How the time passes! Just think, it is more than two years since we ran away with her. I shall never forget the dreadful night when I lost my way."

"Nor I, Mamie; how I did tremble! I could never again go through what I did then, and it is not likely that Lady Montgomery and the captain have forgotten it either, I 'll bet, though it happened two years and eight months ago. Lady Florence must be quite as tall as Miss Isabelle, if not taller, for she was very tall for her age when we took her away."

"Yes, you 're right; we shall hardly know her again; her hair must be very long by this time; I was really sorry to have to cut it. She must have almost forgotten her aunt and cousin, for, after all, she had been with them only a few months, and having had no one to remind her of them she can hardly long to return to them as she did at first."

"No, Mamie; especially as she has become so fond of

the countess. Still, she was too old when we took her away to forget them entirely, and were she to see her aunt and cousin it would all come back to her."

"Well, Katy, perhaps you 're right so far as the aunt is concerned; but she would not recognize her cousin; he has changed so much for the better that I hardly knew him myself."

"Have you seen him?" asked Katy, in surprise.

"Yes, I have; did n't he come to my hotel a few days after we arrived and ask me if I had brought back his cousin, and did n't I swear black and blue that I had never taken her, and did n't he swallow it like a pill? He was very much disappointed, still, he believed me, and he has left us in peace ever since."

"Ah," thought Katy, "there must have been a terrible scene between them, for I have never heard of this before, and Mamie looks mad," but she only said, "I did n't know that he had called to see you, but I have often wondered that we have not been followed, for I expected it; now I understand why; they must be on another tack, and I am glad of it."

At that moment Isabelle came in and they dropped the conversation. The next day they left for Paris and were soon comfortably situated at the Hotel de Paris, where they met several American friends, and for a few weeks Isabelle enjoyed the beauties of the great French capital. She was then taken to the *Couvent du Sacré Coeur,* and left there as a boarder, Miss Hogg promising to call to see her every day until she became accustomed to the place. She and Katy then left for Germany, with the understanding that on their return they would make her another visit. The little girl was quite at home, and well pleased, for the sisters were very kind to her.

CHAPTER LII.

Miss Hogg had not been unobserved. Robert had met them a few days after their arrival and had recognized Miss Hogg and Katy; the little girl he had never before seen, so that it was not possible for him to decide whether or not she was the missing child. He wired to Mathew, apprising him of Miss Hogg's doings. Mathew's reply was to watch, but that the young lady now with Miss Hogg was not Lady Florence, and they could not find out what had become of her; that nothing suspicious had been seen in Miss Hogg's conduct for the past two years, but that he might watch her movements if he so chose. He did so, and reported what we already know. He followed her to Germany, never losing sight of her, but saw nothing but what seemed straight with Miss Hogg; so he returned to Paris, leaving her free to go to Italy, which she did a week after Robert's departure.

On arriving at Naples her first movement was to ascertain whether she had been followed by Robert, for she had seen him during her stay in Paris and in Germany, and she now wanted to make sure that she was not watched by him or some one else; but after a week had elapsed and she had seen nothing to indicate that she was being followed, she wrote to Mrs. Jerry to come to her at her hotel; she came, and plans were made. Mrs. Jerry was to go back to the countess and tell her that the young lady's aunt had just arrived from Australia and would call on her in a day or two to thank her for her kind care of her niece, and to see the latter. The countess was very much pleased to learn that some of her charge's relatives were coming to see her; she was curious to know what they were like; judging from the child, they must be refined and aristocratic people; and I must say that she was disappointed when she saw Miss Hogg, although she was very richly dressed and not nearly so vulgar as she was when we first made her acquaintance, for traveling had certainly improved her appearance and speech. She

sometimes forgot herself when angry or excited, and then she used slang, but not as often as formerly.

The countess, being a lady, felt at once that Miss Hogg had no blue blood; for there is a certain freemasonry among the aristocracy, a certain feeling of equality that makes its members at ease with each other, which grand speeches and fine dress alone cannot do. The countess knew this, and wondered more and more at the appearance of Miss Hogg, for there was no doubt that the little lady she had had with her for so long was an aristocrat; her voice, her walk, her every movement, proclaimed her one of the ten thousand.

Miss Hogg did not feel quite easy under the glance of the countess, who seemed to read her through and through to find the true relationship existing between her and Isabelle Reynolds. The countess asked, "Are you the young lady's aunt on the mother's side?"

"No," replied Miss Hogg; "only by marriage; no blood relation."

"O, I understand," said the countess; "you will pardon me for asking; I saw no resemblance, and wondered if she resembled her mother."

"She is the image of her mother," said Miss Hogg; "and as I was coming to England her parents asked me to call and see the child and to make arrangements for her to spend a year in Germany at school; unless you could reside there yourself for that period they would prefer to have her with you, and I think with them that it would be to their advantage. I see that you are attached to her. You would be conferring a great favor on us all could you so far sacrifice your own inclinations as to accompany her to Germany and keep her under your care. Her parents are willing to double the price now paid should you consent to the arrangement, and as she no longer requires a nurse Mrs. Martin can go back with me. You can consider the matter at your leisure, as I have made up my mind to spend the winter in Italy, and you need not leave for Germany until I leave here, as I wish to see as much of my niece as possible so as to report her progress to her father and mother."

So it was arranged for the present to the satisfaction of all parties. Mrs. Martin told Lady Florence she must

not deny anything that the lady who called herself Mrs. Reynolds would say. The child, strange to say, grew very fond of Miss Hogg, who was certainly very kind to her, and always brought her presents. The countess, after due consideration, consented to go to Germany for a year or more, for, though she was of noble birth, she was not rich, and Miss Hogg's generous offer would add greatly to her income.

Miss Hogg remained in Italy all winter, though not all the time at Naples; she went to Rome and had the pleasure of kneeling before the pope and kissing his feet. She visited Venice, Florence, and other small towns, returning at intervals to Naples to visit the countess, who often wondered why, since she was so fond of her niece, she did not take her with her. But Miss Hogg was too cute to risk discovery by taking Lady Florence with her. Katy was left with the countess, and acted as maid to the young lady, whom she amused in many ways, and whose beautiful, wavy hair, now reaching below her waist, she brushed and twisted round her fingers. She was really a beauty with golden hair, tall and slim, willowy and supple. She often rode a pony almost as golden as her own hair, but whose mane and tail were nearly white. The child's own aunt, Lady Montgomery, could she have seen her, would have been compelled to admit that even if she had been under her own care all this time she could not have been more accomplished and refined.

The day of parting came at last; Miss Hogg and Katy were to return to America, passing through Paris to see Isabelle de Courtney; but the countess thought they were returning to Australia and asked for their address, or that of the young lady's parents.

"Certainly," replied Miss Hogg, "but it will not be necessary to write often unless something unlooked for occurs, for you know the old saying that no news is good news. I will send you a remittance every six months, and probably will make you another visit next year. Still, should anything happen to Isabelle write at once and address your letters to me, Mrs. H. J. Reynolds, care of Mr. Bridgewell, lawyer, No. 9 Regent street, London, W. C." The countess looked surprised, and a cloud appeared on her usually calm face. Why give this address in

London instead of Australia? Something must be wrong, else why make a mystery of the residence of the child's parents? Miss Hogg hastened to explain that they, the parents, were thinking of returning to England as soon as they could find a purchaser for their property—and that might be at any moment—they might leave Australia. A letter sent to them might miss them, so she had thought it best to give her the family lawyer's address, for he would always know where to forward her letters; so the countess, though not quite sure that these were the real reasons, had to be satisfied, and, not possessing a prying mind, she let the matter drop.

Soon after Miss Hogg's departure she left for Hamburg, taking the Italian governess and some of the servants with her, and she was soon settled in a pretty villa in the suburbs of the town, and a German governess and music teacher were engaged for the young lady. Her pony arrived a few days later, and they all soon felt quite at home among the Germans, where we shall leave them, and follow Miss Hogg, who, according to promise, visited Isabelle de Courtney at her convent. She felt the parting with Miss Hogg and sent thousands of kisses to mamma in America; she was going to learn French as quickly as possible, and go back to her, and she would write every week.

Miss Hogg returned to London by way of Havre and Southampton, and remained at the Commercial Hotel with only Katy. They went about a great deal sight-seeing. One day they visited an old ruin that had been a church and convent in the time of Mary Stuart, and in turning a corner they met a gentleman dressed in black, sitting on a stone seat near the wall, and so hidden by ivy and weeds that they might have passed him unseen but for the cry that escaped him. Probably they had startled him by their sudden appearance.

Miss Hogg was passing on without a second look when Katy pulled her sleeve and whispered to her, "Look. It 's Walgrave; is he after us again?"

Miss Hogg stopped short and looked back; she recognized Walgrave, looking older; he saw her looking back, and rising, he raised his hat, saying, "Miss Hogg, don't think I've come here to watch you; I am no longer a

detective; as I could not remain on the force with honor I 've resigned. I could not hunt you down; so that your meeting me to-day is only chance, and quite as much unexpected by me as by you;" and he seated himself again.

Miss Hogg would have passed on without a word, but that Katy said, "Mamie, do say a word to him; he looks so unhappy."

So she turned round again and said, "I believe you, Mr. Walgrave, and I am sorry for the way I treated you." He bowed and she walked away.

"How strange," said Katy, "that we should have met Walgrave in so retired a spot! And he said that he was n't there to spy on us; do you believe him, Mamie?"

"Yes, I do; there was truth in his voice. And to think that he has given up the detective work all through me!"

"Well, Mamie, he loved you so that he could not hunt you down; for he knows as well as we do that you took the child, and he is too honorable to accept pay for services that he cannot perform, so he has retired. If he had not done so we should have been found out by this time, and I think if you had married him he would have coaxed you to give her up; don't you think so?"

"Perhaps you 're right, Katy, but what makes you feel so for him?"

"Well, Mamie, I know what love is, and I pity him; when your time comes you will feel as I do."

"It 's a long time coming, that 's all I can say. Love must be a very strange thing to have made such a change in Walgrave."

They left the abbey with their minds full of Walgrave, and some days later they left Southampton for London. The day after their arrival there Miss Hogg declared that she must send for Lawyer Bridgewell to arrange with him to forward the countess's letters to her.

"But surely, Mamie, you are not going to put us all in the power of that man! Do you think he will forward the countess's letters without opening them? He will guess that they concern the child; he won't scruple to open them, and will at once notify Lord Montgomery, and so secure the reward."

"You may be right, Katy, but when she asked me

for an address I could think of no one else in London; I never thought of his opening the letters. I will write to her and say that having met some friends who are going to America I am going with them, and that she can address her letters to their house at No. —— Clinton avenue, Brooklyn, care of Mrs. Martin; and of course they will be safe in her hands, for she is as much interested in the matter as we are; and even if the countess should suspect that there is a mystery she won't guess the truth, and as she is well paid for looking after Lady Florence she will not be likely to betray us as a lawyer would. Besides, she is a real lady, and would never do a mean action. Of course if she knew how matters stood she would n't help us, but who is to tell her? She seldom sees anyone."

Miss Hogg wrote to the countess and more than once called herself a fool for having given her the lawyer's address. What had become of her cuteness? Was she getting dull for want of practice? It would do her good to have Mathew watching her again; it would stimulate her brains.

Miss Hogg had received letters from her mother from time to time telling her how she missed Isabelle, and in the last one she had asked her to bring her back. She replied that she felt very sorry for her mother, but that she thought it a pity to take her away from school where she was getting along so well. Katy agreed with her mistress, but she thought that they themselves had better return to America soon as there was nothing to keep them in England; it was dull there, and she did n't enjoy it at all. Mamie agreed with her that it had been tame compared with their former visit.

"Well," said Katy, laughing, "we could n't expect to steal a child every time we come here; it would come rather expensive at the rate of the first one."

"Yes," replied Mamie, "but you forget that I got four thousands pounds from Lady Montgomery; it will partly pay for the outlay; though I am not spending that money; I mean that for Isabelle de Courtney, for should ma not make a will the child would get nothing."

"But you would look after her, Mamie."

"Yes, of course; but I may die before ma,"

"Don't talk like that; you make my blood run cold; you so young and strong."

"Well, let 's get ready to go and cheer ma up. We had better go shopping. You buy what you want for Jerry and his mother; I, myself, am going to buy Jerry a good hunting watch."

"How good you are, Mamie!" said Katy, overjoyed at the prospect of returning to her husband.

Two weeks later they were in New York. Mrs. Hogg was greatly disappointed that the child had not returned, and when her daughter saw how unhappy she looked she was sorry she had not brought her back. She tried to console her by telling her how advantageous it was to Isabelle, and how the time would soon pass away. Her father was very glad to see her and asked if another Walgrave was coming to visit her.

"No, pa," she laughed, "I really think I am going to be an old maid."

"Well, it will be your own fault if you do," he replied.

CHAPTER LIII.

A FEW days after this Miss Hogg surprised her mother by asking about her grandfather and grandmother, and why they never came to see them.

"Well, my dear, your father does n't like them, for they are plain folks. I used to make them a visit now and then when I was first married. You must remember when you were about ten or eleven years old I went to the country for a month all alone, leaving you with your father and the servants in our house in Clinton avenue—we had not yet bought this one. That was the last time I ever saw them, and it is very wrong of me to have kept away from them for so long, but it is often the case. When a girl marries she misses her people terribly at first, and her husband is jealous of her love for them; to please him she seldom goes to see them; by and by other ties come; parents and daughter correspond for a little while, when even that stops, especially if they are poorer than the man the daughter has married. It is not the old people who cease writing, but the young ones, who seem to forget all they owe to their parents. I feel my heart warming towards my people, and I wish I could see them once more. It is now five years since I received a letter from my mother, and I am ashamed to say that I never answered it."

"O, ma, why did n't you?"

"I would have done so but for your father, who said that if I did we would have the whole gang after us. Those were his words; for my mother had asked if, situated as your father was, he could not find a good position for your cousin Tom, my brother's son."

"Tom," said Mamie, with a start, remembering her dream at the Temperance Hotel the night she planned the revenge with Katy.

"Yes, Mamie, your cousin Tom is just three years older than you are; then comes Mary, about your own age; then Julia, who is nearly twenty, and Johnny, sixteen.

Those are the children of my eldest brother, Tom Russell, and his wife Mary Brooks. They all live at the old home with father and mother, as far as I know, unless some of the children have married and left."

"But, ma, you have other brothers and sisters, have you not?"

"Yes, dear; but they are settled elsewhere, and are married and pretty comfortable, they told me at home, but not rich, as your father is, and they never write, knowing that your father does n't care about them; they have a great deal of honest pride and will not push themselves where they are not welcome. I felt it very much at the beginning, but it was no use discussing it with your father, so I resigned myself. Your father has been kind to me, he is a good provider, and he loves you very much, so I have no right to complain; it might have been worse. I don't understand how I came to tell you all this. I suppose my own loneliness made me think they must have felt my departure and neglect." Tears ran down her cheeks.

Her daughter threw her arms round her and said: "Don't fret, ma; you are not yourself lately; you are lonely without Isabelle. What do you say to our taking a trip out west to see your people? How old are your father and mother?"

"Let me see," said Mrs. Hogg; "my mother was twenty-four when I was born; when you were born I was twenty-one, and you are now twenty-five."

"O, look here, ma, don't you go and count in that way before strangers," said Mamie, laughing; "it 's all very well between us, you know, but it won't do to tell everybody that I 'm an old maid."

"You 'll never look old, Mamie dear; you don't change at all; no one would take you to be over twenty-two at most; but you have made me forget."

She began to count on her fingers, and said that her mother was seventy years old and her father seventy-six.

"Well, we must go and see them; they will be so pleased to have you back for a month or two, and I want to see them myself. I 'll manage pa, and we must take them lots of things from New York. O, my heart, they 'll be surprised!"

Miss Hogg was pleased to see her mother smile and enter heart and soul into her plans, and the hope of seeing her own people once more made her look five years younger. They would not take any servants with them, for fear they might bring back tales that would offend Mr. Hogg, and no one but himself would know where they were going. All this being agreed upon, they both felt more cheerful. Miss Hogg longed to see her mother's people, and especially cousin Tom, of whom she had dreamed before she knew of his existence. It was certainly very strange, to say the least; so she set about coaxing her father, who was thunderstruck when she first mentioned the subject to him, and blamed his wife. But Mamie told him that it was her own idea; she had been questioning her mother about her grandparents. He would n't hear of it at first; but after three days, in which Miss Hogg gave him no peace, he gave in with the understanding that they would n't bring any of the gang back with them.

Poor Miss Hogg! She little dreamed that this journey would change the whole course of her life, and that she would not bring back as much as she was taking away with her.

Quiet preparations were made; Mrs. and Miss Hogg went out shopping together, and mysterious parcels came to the house. Mrs. Hogg was as enthusiastic as a young girl; she felt so much pleasure in buying things for her people; all the old love seemed to have returned, and she wondered more than once how she could have stayed away from them so long. She hoped that they were still alive, for it was so long since she had heard of them; still, surely, had any of them died some member of the family would have written to apprise her of it. Yet, did she deserve it, she not having answered her mother's last kind letter? She began to fret again, and when she boarded the train it was with a mixture of joy and fear painful to witness. Miss Hogg was all excitement, and she cheered her mother by telling her what they would say and do, and how the old people would laugh with joy at seeing her once more in the old home. And what would they think of her whom they had never seen?

"O, my heart, but won't they be surprised; and to see so many boxes too!"

"O, Mamie dear, we will leave the boxes at the station, and go first and see how they all are; then my brother Tom can go for the boxes the next day. It won't surprise them so much if they see us come on foot as it would if we rode up in a carriage followed by a van full of trunks. You must remember that they are old people and that we must be careful not to give them a shock."

"True, ma; I 'm such a fool that I never thought of it."

"Well, you are young and strong, my dear, and you think that others can bear a surprise as well as you would."

On arriving at their destination they left their luggage in the care of the station master and walked on toward the old homestead. Everything was changed since Mrs. Hogg had visited her parents nearly fifteen years ago. The village was now a small town; the lanes had become streets; the hedges and trees had disappeared to make room for fine houses and shops, and the tavern was now a hotel with pleasure grounds and summerhouses here and there, where a lot of people were having a good time, it being summer.

Mrs. Hogg hardly knew her way; everything seemed strange to her. After walking about a mile she began to look for the gate that led to her old home, but the old gate seemed to have disappeared, and she stood still looking about, thinking that she must have made a mistake. Turning to Mamie, she said, "Well, my dear, I think the gate ought to be here, but here 's a high wall instead; there were only hedges in my time, and no walls. Perhaps the place has been sold; we shall have to ask. There are some people working in the field yonder, but we can't call them for they are too far away."

Miss Hogg laughed as the thought came to her that she had asked Lord Montgomery to whistle to his mother, who was almost as far away as those people were.

"Why, Mamie, what is there to laugh about? I assure you that I am distressed, for I know my parents so well that I am sure they would never have sold the old place where they were born."

"Well, ma, I was n't laughing at that, but at what you would think if I were to whistle to those people. I can do it ever so well."

"Mamie, Mamie, how you shock me! What would they think of you? and what would my people say if it ever came to their ears? for they are quite English, and I have heard them say more than once that a hen that crows and a woman that whistles ought to be destroyed. But here comes a gentleman; he seems in a hurry too, judging by his walk; let us ask him the way to grandpa's."

As the gentleman passed he raised his hat, seeing that they were strangers—which is the English and French fashion—and would have passed on, but Mrs. Hogg stopped him by saying, "Sir, can you inform us where Farmer Russell lives?"

"Certainly, madam; I am going there myself, and will gladly accompany you there;" and for a moment he looked hard at the ladies and then exclaimed, "Why, it's Aunt Sophy! Don't you know me, Tom Russell, your nephew?" and in a moment he had taken her hand and given her a hearty kiss.

"Of course it is Tom, but how changed! Why, I should never have known you."

"Well, Aunt Sophy, fourteen years change a boy into a man. And this young lady, if I guess right, must be my cousin Mamie, whom I have heard of but never seen."

"Yes, Tom, you're right."

Mamie had been looking at him while he had been speaking to her mother, and she thought that she had never seen so handsome a man in New York. He looked quite English, with his fair complexion, blond hair and mustaches, and English ways. How nicely he had lifted his hat to them, though he had believed them to be strangers! He was tall and slight, and he had the finest blue eyes she had ever seen; as they met her dark ones his flashed, and she felt the color rise to her cheeks; he had taken her hand and had seemed on the point of kissing her as he had her mother, but after their eyes had met he only pressed her hand and said how pleased he was to have met her. "I can return the compliment," she had replied, and they walked on, Mrs. Hogg inquiring about every one at home. She was rejoiced to learn that they were all in good health. Tom asked about his uncle, whom he had never seen, but did not discuss him,

to the great relief of his aunt, who felt ashamed of his behavior toward her family.

Mrs. Hogg was very tired. Tom saw it, and taking her hand he placed it on his arm to help her, and asked her why she had n't taken a cab at the station. "All the cabmen know where Farmer Russell lives."

"We ought to have done so, but I was afraid of giving my parents a shock by coming upon them too suddenly, and I thought I knew my way to the old home; but everything is so changed that I did n't know what to do, when you came upon us so opportunely. But where are you going, Tom?" she added, as Tom stopped at a fine, large gate, and opening it, passed in, saying, as he turned to his cousin:

"Welcome to Russell farm, dear Mamie; this is your first visit, but I hope and trust it may not be your last."

"Thank you, cousin Tom, for your kind welcome; I will try to deserve it."

"And this is really the old house?" said Mrs. Hogg; "that high wall instead of the hedge and trees where we used to go nesting, and this wide, beautifully graveled avenue, where we only had a cart track. But here is an old friend of mine still left," as she pointed to an immense apple tree with a garden seat against it.

"Yes, Aunt Sophy; and you will see many more as you near the house. But I was thinking that perhaps it would be best if you sat down on this old seat in the shade to rest and brace up for the meeting with the old people while Mamie and I go to prepare them."

"You 're right, Tom; they don't know Mamie, so she can't give them a shock."

She sat down and thought of her young days and the fun she had had with the other children under this very apple tree. As for Mamie, she had picked up three or four large, red apples and was busy eating one of them as her cousin turned toward her and said, laughingly, "Take my arm, cousin Mamie, we are going to have fun." She did so. They marched down the avenue and soon came in sight of a large, old-fashioned farmhouse, with rather small windows and a thatched roof, English fashion. In front of the house was a flower garden with graveled walks; climbing rose vines, nearly reaching the upper

windows, were very effective, as they were in bloom; the porch was covered with clematis as white as snow.

"O, what a grand old place!" exclaimed Mamie.

"I am glad you like it," replied Tom, looking attentively at her.

"And look, Tom; there 's some one looking at us from the open window—a lady—who is she?"

"My sister Mary; and see, she has beckoned to some one in the room—my other sister, Julia, and also my young brother John; they are looking at us very hard."

Tom laughed, and as Mamie looked at him she saw that he looked mischievous, and wondered why.

Let us leave the young people to reach the house by themselves, and enter the room where Mary had been standing at the window watching for Tom, who was later than usual; and when he came in sight with a lady on his arm her surprise was great and she had called Julia and John to come and look. "Who can the lady be?" said Julia; "they seem very friendly, and I have never before seen Tom with a lady on his arm, have you?"

"No," answered Mary; "I wonder if he has eloped with her, married her, and brought her home; it would be too bad, for I wanted to be bridesmaid."

"And so did I," said Julia.

"O, you girls are always thinking of marriage. Tom would n't be such a fool; is n't he all right without getting married?"

"Well, Mr. Wiseman," said Mary, "perhaps you 'll tell us who the lady is."

"Well, she 's some one."

"Of course she 's some one," said Julia; "but here they are; how friendly they seem!" as they saw Tom and Mamie disappear in the porch; but they soon came into the living room where the young people were. Tom walked right into the middle of the room with Mamie still on his arm, and said, "I have brought this young lady to introduce her to you, but first I want you to guess who she is."

"O, I know," said Mary; "you have been stealing a march on us; it 's a shame, for I wanted to be bridesmaid; she 's your wife, I can see that."

Mamie started and blushed. Tom laughed merrily and Mamie soon joined him.

"Well," said Tom, "are you satisfied with my choice?"

"I am," said Julia, giving Mamie a kiss, which she returned.

"And so am I," said Mary, also kissing Mamie.

"And you, John, why do you keep in the background when every one else comes to the front?"

"Because I know that you 're fooling the girls; you 'd never marry on the sly; what would the old folks say to it?"

"O, well, we 'll soon see for ourselves, for we 're going to them. Come, Mamie," said Tom, and they all followed to see the *dénouement.* When in the hall he asked, "Where 's grandfather?"

"In the back garden," said Mary.

"Well, you run and fetch him, but mind you don't tell him I 'm married, whatever you do."

"I won't, Tom, for I begin to think, like John, that you 're playing us a trick."

"And where 's grandmother—in the parlor?"

"No, in her room, trying on her new cap."

"Well, Julia, you go up and help her with it, and bring her down, and not a word to her either; let me manage my own affairs. And you, John, show the way to the parlor to my Mamie, while I go to mother in the kitchen," and he went towards the back of the house. Mamie called him back and told him not to say that she was his wife; he laughed and said, "All right."

John stood, not knowing what to do, until Mamie reminded him that he was to show her the way to the sitting room, which he did. He asked her to remove her hat and coat, and whether she was going to stay or going back soon. She said she would stay if she was not turned out, and asked him if he wished her to stay.

"Yes, I do, for you seem a jolly girl, not a milksop."

"Well, that 's very nice of you, John, and as you mean it as a compliment I will take it as such; I think you and I will get along well together, don't you?"

"Yes, Mamie. May I call you Mamie?"

"Yes, I want you all to call me Mamie."

"Well, tell me, Mamie, are you married to Tom?"

She could n't help laughing, but said, "You want to know too much; I can't interfere with Tom's plans; you 'll

know presently. But, even if I 'm not Tom's wife you must like me; will you promise?"

"I will," said the boy, in a gentlemanly way; and Miss Hogg thought how could pa say that they were fools and unfit to mix in good society? Why, as far as she had seen, their manners were far superior to those of her own family, when she remembered what coarse language she used herself before she had gone traveling, and even now she sometimes forgot herself and used slang that would shock these quiet country people. She longed to see the old people and hoped they would like her.

Tom had gone to the kitchen, where his mother was assisting in preparing the supper, and, calling her aside, he told her that Aunt Sophy had come, and, fearing to surprise her, she had stayed outside, and was sitting on the old bench under the apple tree in the avenue. "You go to her while I prepare grandmother and grandfather. I 've brought Mamie, my cousin, into the house; the girls think she 's my wife and I 've allowed them to think so. Mamie 's a fine girl, I can tell you."

"Is she?" said his mother, mischievously. "Well, I 'm glad they 've come, and so will be your father and the old folks too," and she went out to bring in Sophy, while Tom went to the parlor, where he found the two old people, his two sisters, and John awaiting his arrival.

The old gentleman, who was tall and noble looking, said, "What 's all this mystery, Tom? Have you at last made up your mind to get married and brought the young lady for our approval? If so, my boy, speaking for myself, I am very well pleased," and he kissed Mamie on the forehead.

But she threw her arm around his neck and gave him a hearty kiss, saying, "Dear grandpa, I 'm so glad you like me."

Tom laughed loud and long at the puzzled look on the faces of his sisters and brother.

The old lady, who had been a pretty blonde in her time, and who was still very good looking, came next, and said, "Well, my dear, if Tom has been a long time choosing a wife at least he has chosen well; you are a fine girl, and seem to take to us as if you belonged to the family."

"I do belong to the family, dear grandma," said Mamie,

and kissed her tenderly, for she felt that they were good people to take her to their hearts at so short a notice; surely blood was speaking; she must have some of the blood of the Russells as well as that of the Hoggs; and, turning to Tom, who was still laughing, she said, "Look here, Tom, I won't have them mystified any longer."

Seeing her grandmother seated on the large sofa, she went and sat by her and took her hand; then inviting her grandfather to sit on the other side she took his hand too, and said, "Now you must be very calm and not surprised at all; do you promise? I am going to tell you something that I believe will please you: I am Mamie Hogg, and I have come to make you a visit."

"And how 's your mother, my dear?" said the old man; "not dead, for you 're not in mourning."

"No, grandpa; would you have liked her to come too?"

"Certainly," they both exclaimed at the same time; "why did n't she?"

"Well, she has," said Tom; "and she 's now in the kitchen with mother; I 'll go and fetch her. But was n't it a good trick of mine to make you all believe that Mamie was my wife, or at least had come to be approved of? Ha, ha, ha! but that was grand!" and he ran out of the room, his two sisters after him, thumping him in the back for having made fools of them, which treatment made him enter the kitchen in such a hurry as to nearly upset his father, who stood against the door talking to his sister.

"Why, Tom," said his mother, "you are acting like a boy,—you, usually so sedate!"

"Well, mother, the girls are nearly murdering me because I made them believe that Mamie was my wife; and it was they who pushed me into the kitchen with such force as to nearly knock down the governor."

"Did you really play that trick on them?" said his father, laughing.

"Yes," answered Tom, "and the old people thought she was a young lady I had brought for their approval."

"And did they approve?"

"Yes; and when she called them grandpa and grandma I thought I should go into a fit to see Mary, Julia, and even John. O, it was too good for anything!" And even Mrs. Hogg laughed merrily at her nephew's joke.

"Now, Aunt Sophy, I have been sent to fetch you; the old people long to see you."

"And we long to see Mamie," said his father and mother.

"The idea of Tom smuggling her into the house without telling me," said his mother.

So they all went in together, and the old people cried over Mrs. Hogg and made her feel sorry for having neglected them for so many years; but at last the tears gave way to smiles and they all felt happy; the fifteen years seemed to have been bridged over for the old people. To the young folks, who had never before seen one another, it was easier to be merry, for there was nothing to throw a shadow over the present, and Mamie felt like one of themselves.

The next day she was taken all over the farm, and Tom was delighted when she said she could ride, but that gave him no idea of what a fine horsewoman she really was, nor of her strength and daring. His sisters rode well, but were timid about leaping a gate or a hedge, nor did they deem it seemly for a lady; but Tom was a dare-devil, and admired pluck in a woman. Well, he would be pleased with his cousin, for she dared more than he.

While the young people were enjoying themselves the older ones were talking over old times. Mrs. Hogg did n't like to ask what Tom was doing, though she could see that he was not a farmer, for she could never forget the letter sent her by her mother about him; but her father, as if he had been reading her thoughts, said, "Tom is not a farmer, and he will not take his father's place as the Russells have always done from father to son; he has become a lawyer, and, young as he is, he has pretty good practice in Jefferson City; he might make more money in a larger place, but we could n't spare him; he is the life of our home."

Mrs. Hogg had flushed painfully at her father's mention of a great city. The old man continued: "John is a good boy, and will also stay home; he will take his father's place as your brother Tom took mine when I became too old to work, and I must say that he has greatly improved the place, and you must have noticed it on your way here, Sophy."

"I did, father, and could not find my way to my old home; happily we met Tom, who brought us here."

"Did you know Tom?" asked her mother, surprised.

"No, mother, but he knew me."

Tom had to go to business, but promised to be back as soon as possible; he told John to show Mamie the horses and let her have her pick of them, as he would ride with her on his return if she was willing.

"Yes, Tom," said Mamie, who had heard him, "I 'll ride with you, but I won't race to-day; we can take the country roads, see the neighborhood, and at the same time select the place for this race that is to cover us with laurels."

"No, fair cousin," said Tom, "you will win the laurels, not I."

"Come now, Tom, you know you don't mean it; I see that by your eyes, which are full of mischief; but I 'll do my best, you may depend upon it."

Her fine black eyes flashed with courage and determination and Tom thought, "What a fine woman my cousin is! I will not allow her to break her neck; she looks as though she would follow where I lead."

They parted at the gate; he smiled, and, raising his hat, hurried to catch the train for Jefferson City, leaving Mamie and John, who had walked with him up the avenue, looking after him. Mamie seemed lost in thought, and when John said "Don't you think that Tom is handsome?" she started and blushed; then said, "I think you are all good looking, and grandma and grandpa the best looking of all."

"So they are," said John, "and the best of all. Now come and see the horses, cousin Mamie."

They went to the stables, where there were many farm horses—all but three, in fact—and John would not tell her to whom they belonged, for Tom had said that she was to choose, and if he told her which Tom's was he was sure she would not take that; he said that all three would carry a lady.

"But don't you see, you bad boy, that if I happen to choose Tom's he won't care to ride another, while I don't care which I ride; they are all alike to me. Do tell me, John."

But John stood with his hands in his pockets deter-

mined not to tell. He said, "You can't call it choosing if I tell you, and I won't if you keep me here all day."

"All right; I am going to choose;" and she chose the black one because there seemed to be plenty of go in him, and it was just what she wanted.

"Now, John, I have chosen the black one; is it Tom's? You must tell me."

"It is not Tom's, but father's horse, Black Prince."

"Well, he 's a fine horse," said Mamie; "I like him, and I 'm glad that I did n't choose Tom's; which is his?"

"The dark brown one; and the lighter one is Mary's; she 'll want you to take that, but don't do it, he 's too quiet; he would never follow Tom's horse, but old Black Prince will; he 's full of fire, for father seldom rides him; it will do him good to have a gallop. Don't let Tom beat you; he 's a splendid rider and brags that he can't be beat."

"Surely, John, you don't expect me to beat him; you don't want me to break my neck, do you?"

"No, I want you to beat Tom; that 's all."

"All right, John; I 'll do my best, but if I come to grief it will be your fault. Now I want you to do something for me. Send one of the men to the railway station with a large wagon and bring all our baggage while Tom is away, and you and I will arrange all the presents for to-night. What do you say? Can you spare the time?"

"Yes, Mamie, for I still attend school; but as I have a two weeks' holiday I 'll do all you want me to, for the girls can't help you much; they have their work to do; we only keep two maid servants for the house, and there 's a lot to do with the cooking for more than fifteen people, for we have five, and sometimes six, men helping on the farm and they all eat at our house; then there 's butter-making twice a week, and that 's no joke, for we have twenty-five cows. The men milk the cows. Then we make cheese English fashion, and though we have been in America for some generations we keep the old ways and are still quite English."

"Yes, I noticed that," replied Mamie. "As soon as I saw Tom I said to myself, 'This is an Englishman.' I have been to England several times, and I could tell at a glance."

"Yes, and he is very proud of looking like one; but I

shall have to leave you, for I mean to go for your trunks myself."

"But, John, can you drive?"

"Can I drive? Well I should think so; I could drive when I was ten years old."

"All right, John, good-by; I 'm going to see them make the butter."

So Mamie went all over the farm, making herself quite at home, never getting in anybody's way, and she soon became a favorite with every one.

At first Mary and Julia feared that she would look down upon them for making the butter and cheese and helping in the kitchen; but she soon undeceived them by asking Mary to let her churn while she looked after the dinner.

"But you 'll never be able to do it," said Mary; "you 're not used to work."

"Well, I should smile," said Mamie; "do you mean to say that I can't turn that handle as well as you? I 'll bet I 'll turn it easier than you; look here." And taking hold of the handle, she began to turn it with a will, and she laughingly said, "I hope the top of the box is well fastened or I 'll have the butter up to the ceiling in a jiffy."

Mary laughed, admired her cousin's great strength, and, assuring her that the top of the box was quite secure, she left her, to go and see after the dinner. In less than three quarters of an hour Mamie went into the kitchen, saying, "You 'd better come and see about the butter; I can't turn the wheel half so easy; it seems to bring a great weight up; then all of a sudden it drops down as if falling in water. I do hope I have n't spoiled the cream."

"No, Mamie, but the butter must be made; I must go and see presently. How quick you have been about it! It generally takes me and Julia a whole hour, and we relieve each other, for it 's hard work, and you 've done it all alone; won't Tom be surprised? But you look tired; it 's a shame for me to have allowed you to do it. What will Aunt Sophy say when she hears of it?"

"Here she is, ask her;" said Mamie, as her mother came into the kitchen with Mrs. Russell.

"What have you been up to, Mamie?"

"O, I 've been making the butter, ma. What do you think of that?"

"Well, I must say that I 'm surprised, my dear. I often made the butter in my young days, and I 'm glad you 've tried your hand at it."

And Mrs. Russell, patting her on the cheek, said, "You have plenty of Russell blood in you, my dear; it won't hurt you to learn to make butter and to cook."

John returned with the trunks and uncorded them. After dinner, and when Mary and Julia had finished their work, they all went to see the contents of the trunks. There were presents for each member of the family—slippers, dressing-gowns, and silk handkerchiefs for grandpa and grandma; for Mr. Russell, Jr., an umbrella, a box of scarfs, two scarf-pins—one, a diamond solitaire, the other, a ruby; for Mrs. Russell, black satin and cashmere for dresses, a diamond breastpin, a box of gloves, and a box of cambric handkerchiefs. Julia and Mary had exclaimed more than once, "O, how lovely, how grand!" John was also looking on admiringly, wondering if there was anything for him. And Miss Hogg said, smiling:

"Ladies first, you know, John."

"O, it 's all right Mamie; I don't want anything;" and he drew back ashamed of having been caught looking.

The girls' turn came next. The trunk was nearly full of black silk, gray silk, woolen goods, white and colored lace, ribbons, gloves and handkerchiefs, perfumes, and a pair of diamond earrings apiece.

"O, Mamie, you ought not to have brought all these grand things for us; we are only a farmer's daughters, you know," said they.

"Well, even so," said Mamie; "there 's nothing here that the daughters of a well-to-do farmer may not wear."

She was rewarded with a hearty kiss. John said she was a trump.

"Thank you, John; I hope you 'll be pleased with what I 've brought you; open that small box carefully."

He did so, and found a gold watch and chain. His eyes sparkled with pleasure as he said, "O, Mamie, you and Aunt Sophy are regular bricks!"

"Now for Tom," said Mamie; and opening another box she brought out a silver mounted case, an opera glass, a seal

ring, a riding whip, a ruby scarf pin, and a box of scarfs. "There, that 's all," said she. "No, there 's a box of scarfs also for John; I must have overlooked it. O, here it is; you will also find a pin in the top one. Now this last trunk I 'm not going to open, for I am tired. I 'll tell you what 's in it: mamma bought a dinner and tea set for Aunt Mary. Now let us arrange everything in order, and to-night when everybody's at home, say after supper, you, John, bring the things in to each one as I have told you."

Then they all went out in the avenue and met Tom at the gate just coming in, who said, "Why, Mamie, you 're not dressed for our ride; how 's that? And I 've been hurrying to get back."

"Never mind, cousin Tom, I won't go to-day; I 'm too tired."

"Too tired," said Tom; "why, what have you been doing to tire you? Has John been taking you about the farm?"

"That 's not what 's to blame for her being tired," snapped John; "it 's the girls; they 've been getting her to churn the butter."

Tom looked at Mamie and she felt the color mount to her cheeks, and he hastened to say, "I 'm so glad, cousin Mamie, that you 're one of ourselves, but you should not have tried to churn the butter, for it 's too hard work even for those who are used to it."

"I 'm all right," said Mamie; "I enjoyed making the butter. It is not that that has tired me, and John knows it. I have chosen a horse; guess which one."

"I hope it is mine; if it is you are welcome to it."

"No, it is n't, and I 'm glad of it."

"Well, which one is it? Don't keep us in suspense."

"It 's Uncle Tom's old Black Prince."

"O, Mamie, don't ride that horse!" cried Mary and Julia together; "he 'll throw you, he 's so fresh; it 's as much as papa can do to manage him."

"Do take mine," said Mary, "he 's so quiet."

"I think Mary 's right," said Tom, uneasily; "or, if you prefer mine take it, dear Mamie."

It was the first time that Tom had called her dear, and it gave her a shock; her heart stood still for a moment; she felt a kind of pain and pleasure intermixed. What could

it be? She had never felt so in all her life. She had not answered and was not even thinking about the horses. Tom looked at his cousin with a soft look in his large blue eyes, and he continued, "You 'll have mine, won't you, Mamie? and I 'll take father's."

Mamie awoke from her reverie, and met Tom's eyes for a moment, and it burst on her like a flash that she loved her cousin Tom. The joy of the moment was great, for she read love in her cousin's eyes as well as if he had told her in words. How she wished she could be alone in her own room to enjoy this great discovery! She who had flirted with so many men, and had never felt any pity or sympathy for any of them, began to understand how they must have suffered to have loved and received nothing but mockery in return. Poor Walgrave, for instance; she had wrecked his life, and she felt for him at that moment. Her life seemed to have changed suddenly; everything seemed bright and beautiful around her, and she knew that if her cousin Tom was removed from her surroundings it would be all darkness and desolation for her. She was nearly twenty-five, and had never loved before. Her love for her cousin must be a great and grand passion—for happiness or misery. All these thoughts passed through her mind in less than a minute. As she tried hard to control her feelings John came to her rescue by saying, "Don't you mind them, Mamie; father's horse is the best, and Tom wants it, to beat you."

Mamie was herself again, and laughingly said, "I think I 'll take John's advice; I like Black Prince."

Tom admired her courage and promised himself to watch over her, for she was becoming very dear to him. Had he known her better he would have seen at once that she cared for him, for her manner was quiet and reserved when she addressed him; but having known her only two days, he had no idea of the change that had come over her and did not guess that he was dear to her, while Mamie knew that the look he had given her was one of true love. Women can always tell love from friendship quicker than men, and especially women of Miss Hogg's age.

That evening after supper, as it had been prearranged, all the presents were brought to the sitting room, and when

the older people came in they saw the tables and some of the chairs covered with miscellaneous articles.

"O, that 's right, Mamie," said her mother; "I had really forgotten all about those things. But before you begin to distribute them go to my room, open my largest trunk, and bring me the paper parcel that you will find at the top."

Mamie ran up wondering what it could be, for she thought all the presents had been put into the trunks that she had already opened. She soon came back with a good-sized parcel which felt very soft.

"Is that what you mean, ma?"

"Yes, my dear;" and, cutting the strings, she disclosed a large and beautiful fur cloak, which she placed on her mother's shoulders, saying, "It just fits you, dear mother, do you like it?"

The old lady's face flushed, and she replied, "It is very beautiful, Sophy, and I thank you very much for your kindness, but still I wish you had not brought it, as your husband does not feel kindly toward us, as all here know, or I would not refer to it."

"Well, mother, it is I who am giving it to you."

"I know, dear; and that only makes it worse, for it has been bought with his money."

"Well, look here, grandma," said Miss Hogg, "did n't you spend much more than that cloak is worth to bring up ma, and did n't you give her to my pa for nothing? Come, now, what have you to say? You know you can't deny it;" and she laughed so heartily that every one joined in at her queer way of squaring matters; even her grandmother, who said:

"Well, my dear, it would be wrong in me to say a word more and spoil your pleasure; it was my pride that spoke, not my heart. The Russells, though not very rich, had a great deal of honest pride."

"That 's all right, grandma, but you see I have proved to you that ma owes a great deal more to you and grandpa than she can repay, and I also owe you lots, I guess, for such a ma, so I won't hear another word."

And not another word was said by anyone except words of thanks and admiration. Mrs. Hogg was seen putting something in her father's hand, and the old gentleman

laughingly exposed it to view; it was a gold snuff box. "Look here," he said, "Sophy has not forgotten that I sometimes take a pinch of snuff on the sly; it 's a wonder that she has n't brought me some snuff too."

"But I have, father," said Mrs. Hogg, smilingly, "and here it is;" producing a package from the parcel.

"Well, let 's try it;" and he soon had some in his gold box. All the young people had a pinch, and there never before was such sneezing and laughing. In fact, they all had a grand time that night, and Miss Hogg had never felt so happy in all her life.

The next afternoon she went riding with her cousin Tom and Mary, not for the proposed race, but to try Black Prince and also to see the neighborhood. When Tom helped his cousin to mount her horse he felt that she was no ordinary horsewoman and that she would not require being looked after, and Black Prince seemed to think the same; he had tried to be frisky as John brought him along, but as soon as Mamie had mounted and held the reins he became as gentle as a lamb, though his black eyes flashed brightly, and he seemed to be in a hurry to be off; but Miss Hogg's strong hand held him in check. John having helped his sister to mount, Tom mounted also, and all three went up the avenue at a slow pace, Tom between Miss Hogg and his sister. They went through the village, Tom and Mary pointing out to their cousin everything that was worth seeing; then taking the country road they showed her the principal farms, none of which, Mamie said, pleased her as much as her grandfather's.

"Well," said Tom, "I agree with you there, Mamie, if the farm was larger, but we need more ground; now, for instance, if we could buy the farm adjoining ours and make it into one, we should have the largest and best farm hereabouts; we often speak of it and wish we could buy it, for it is for sale; but it can't be done, as grandfather and grandmother will not hear of getting a mortgage on our farm, which is unencumbered at present and has belonged to the Russells for nearly two hundred years. They say that it would make the dead rise from their graves were they to borrow money on it; nor will they consent to purchase the other one unless they have the cash to pay for it; and I am always in a fever for fear that the place may be

sold, which is rather selfish on my part, since we can't buy it ourselves, don't you think so, Mamie?"

"Well, no, Tom, it is natural, I think; and I wish you could get it as it joins your grounds;" and she made up her mind to induce her father to buy it so that in time she could give it to the old people; but she did n't say so; she only asked the price. Tom said they were asking twenty-five thousand dollars, but would take less if they could get cash—perhaps twenty thousand dollars—and that under good management it would bring at least from ten to fourteen per cent. and no risk of any bankruptcy; the money would be safe; no one could run away with the land, as cashiers did with the money in banks.

"But all this talk cannot be interesting to you, my dear cousin."

"Of course not," said his sister; "what can cousin Mamie care about farms?"

"You are very much mistaken, Mary; I am very much interested in this one at least, and must discuss the matter with Tom later on; he, being a lawyer, will give me all the information I want. Is the house nice?" she continued.

"Well, yes, nice enough, but not as large as ours; I will point it out to you on our return."

"Yes, do, Tom. Now show me the road where you expect to beat me at that famous race that we are to have—you and I—for I don't think that Mary cares to take part in it."

"No, indeed, Mamie; and if I were you I would not listen to Tom, for I know what he intends to do; there is a high gate on the road and he means to leap over it. I warn you, Mamie, for he played me that trick long ago; then when I would n't follow he laughed at me and said he had won the race; so don't trust him."

Miss Hogg looked at him, met his soft blue eyes, and thought to herself, "I would trust him with my very life; how handsome he is!" But she only said, "O, is that so, cousin Tom? And you 'll expect me to leap over everything that comes in my way, and if I don't I shall lose the race?"

"No, no, Mamie;" replied Tom, merrily, for he saw a great deal of mischief shining in his cousin's eyes. "I won't leap over the toll gate if you don't want me to. I

did it with Mary, for I knew that she would never dare follow me, but I would be afraid to try it with you, for I think you would follow at any risk."

Miss Hogg laughed and thought, "How well he knows me!" but said, "Thank you, Tom, for your good opinion of me. Can Prince leap?"

"Black Prince?" said Mary; "I should think so; my father bought that horse from an English gentleman who had no further need of him as he was going to the gold mines, and he coaxed father to buy him, as he knew that the horse would be in good hands with us; he said the horse had no vices, but was high-spirited, and would leap over any gate in his way; that his wife had often mounted him and followed the steeple chase and that no harm had ever come to her; but that she was a fine and fearless rider, and that he would not advise us young ladies to try him, and we never have. Father says that when he has been in his stable for a week or more without going out it is as much as he can do to manage him, for what he wants is a hard gallop at the start; then he tones down. Father says that Black Prince is high-spirited and feels happy; that 's all."

"Dear old horse," said Miss Hogg, rubbing his neck with her whip. The horse tossed up his head proudly as if he understood her. "There are few horses that I would not mount," she continued, "still, I must know them, then I can be on my guard. I love a high-spirited horse."

"How many horses have you, Mamie?" asked Mary.

"Only one that I can call my own, and pa has one, but I can't say that either of them equals Black Prince; they are not English horses. Then we have two carriage horses."

"Well," said Tom, "how do you like this road for a race? This is the one I was telling you about."

"What, with the toll gate?"

"Yes; you can see it from here."

"So I do; it will do very well, but don't you think we had better go back? The sun is setting and it will be dark before we reach home."

"You are right, Mamie; I was forgetting that we have more than a five miles' ride before us;" and their horses' heads were turned towards home again.

"What do you think of our sunsets? You don't see the like in New York, hey?"

"No, we never see the sun set or rise either in the busy part of New York, but I have seen better at sea—too grand for description—and so is the rising of a full moon. I have seen lovely sunsets in France and in Southampton, but not in London. I never saw the sun set there, and the greater part of the day the sun looked a full moon. Still, London is a grand and beautiful city. Have you ever been there, Tom?"

"No, Mamie, but I hope to go some day. I have been to New York several times."

"And why did n't you come to"—then she stopped and her face flushed. She felt ashamed that these people who were so kind to her, and whom she had been taught by her father to look down upon and to think of as ignorant fools not fit to visit them, even now she must not dare to invite to her father's house—she felt humiliated, and hardly knew what to say; and Tom, seeing her embarrassment, pitied her, for he knew that Mr. Hogg alone was to blame. Aunt Sophy had always been nice to them when she had made them a visit, and if she had not answered her mother's letter the blame had been put on her husband by every member of the family, and not on her; so he said, "Don't distress yourself, my dear cousin; I did not call because we are proud people and have no wish to force ourselves on people richer than we are. If I had called it is likely that I would have been well received by your father as well as by Aunt Sophy and yourself. Look; here 's the farm that I 've been telling you about; how do you like it? The house is almost new and quite stylish, is n't it?"

"It is, and I like it. It is occupied for I see lights in the windows."

"O, yes, it would never do to have the place empty, for the farm and cattle have to be looked after."

The three young people reached home after their pleasant ride and had much to tell the older ones.

CHAPTER LIV.

WEEKS passed, and Miss Hogg felt quite at home. She went all about the farm, admiring the cows, the calves, and the poultry, would help Julia to bring in the eggs, and she even tried to milk a cow, but in that she came to grief. She had asked Mary if she could milk a cow as the men servants were doing.

"Yes," replied Mary, "I can milk, but we never do it; we have enough to do in the house."

"Well," said Miss Hogg, "you must teach me; I must be able to say when I return home that I have made butter and milked a cow."

"Well, you will easily learn, for you are not afraid; when do you wish to begin?"

"O, there 's no time like the present," replied Mamie.

"Well, I 'll get a pail, and an apron, so that you won't spoil your dress and will look more like a milkmaid;" and Mary, enjoying the fun as much as did her cousin, took a three legged stool and the pail, and they set forth in quest of the most quiet looking cow for Mamie to experiment upon and learn the art of milking. Mary selected one, then sat on the right side of the cow and began milking in her pail. It looked very easy to Mamie, who said, "I don't need much teaching; I 'm sure that I can do it as well as you."

"All right, Mamie, try;" and she gave her the pail and stool. Mamie walked straight to the left side of the cow. Luckily Mary was watching, and she called out, "Not that side, Mamie, or she 'll kick you."

"O, does that matter?"

"Certainly; always go to the right side of the cow."

"O, that 's all right, it makes no difference to me, and I don't think it would make any difference with the cow either; it 's all your fancy. How can a cow know which is her right or left side, I should like to know?" and she sat on the stool, and having set the pail firmly between her knees, as she had seen the men do, she caught hold of one of the

teats, and passing her fingers and thumb over it, pulling downwards, as Mary had done and had brought out the milk so easily, she found she could n't make the milk come except in small splashes, and once having turned the teat up, it splashed right into her eyes and all over her face, nearly blinding her, Mary laughing heartily.

"O," thought Mamie, "the milk does n't come right because I don't pinch the teats hard enough;" and catching hold of one of them firmly, she pinched it and pulled on it with all her strength, and by so doing hurt the poor cow, which gave a kick right into the bucket, upsetting Mamie and her stool, and dragging the pail with her, her foot held fast inside of it; it was some time before she got rid of it, and poor Mamie was lying on the grass all splashed with the milk and quite unable to rise, for the cow was running round and round as far as her chain would allow her. Mary hurried to the rescue, yet she could not help laughing, and Mamie laughed too when she saw how ridiculous she looked lying down on the grass, seemingly lost in admiration at the cow's antics. At last the cow was stopped and held fast by Mary, while Mamie rose to her feet again and got out of the cow's reach, leaving her stool behind.

"Well," said Mary, "shall we try again, Mamie?"

"O, my heart, I guess not! I had rather tackle a dozen horses than one cow."

Mary laughed till the tears ran down her cheeks, but she managed to say, "Don't be angry with me for laughing; I can't help it; you did really look so funny, and what ever made you spurt the milk into your face instead of in the pail?"

Mamie laughed so heartily at the recollection of the start she had got when the milk had come so suddenly and unexpectedly splashing her in the eyes that she could not answer for some time; at last she said, "Well, Mary, as the milk would n't come out I lifted the teat to see if the hole was stopped up, and I pulled it upward to have a look at it, but before I had time to make the inspection I was blinded; I soon had the proof by my feelings, if not by the sight, that the hole was not stopped up, for the milk came out with a vengeance. I have often been told that inquisitive people come to grief, and now I know it."

"But, Mamie, won't you try once more—not with this

cow, for she knows you too well to allow you to approach her again, but with another one."

"Well, I should smile! Look at the state I 'm in; why, the sight of me would send any cow into fits. Just feel my hair; it is getting stiff where the milk has splashed. I shall have to go and take a bath, for I feel awfully bad."

"Poor Mamie," laughed Mary; "you really look bad, and your nice dress is quite spoiled; but then you won't be able to say that you have milked a cow if you don't try again."

"I don't care, Mary, but you don't catch me trying again, and it will be much more amusing to relate what has just happened than to simply say, 'I can milk a cow.' "

"But surely you are not going to tell anyone what you have just done to the poor cow and how she retaliated upon you?"

"O, but I am; it will be great fun."

And she did that night, and she laughed so heartily that every one joined in, and Julia remarked, "I do hope, cousin Mamie, that you won't come to grief in your race with Tom as you did with the cow to-day. I would n't go if I were you."

"Won't I, though? Black Prince and I know one another by this time. I ride him every morning before you 're up."

"Quite true," said Mr. Russell, "I have seen her, and really she manages him far better than I do. When is the race to be, Mamie?"

"Saturday afternoon, when Tom comes back from his office; he comes too late on other days."

"Well, my dear, be very careful, and you, Tom, don't go at breakneck pace, and don't leap over tolls and hedges; remember that your cousin will try to follow you."

"All right, father; I 'll let Mamie go first and I 'll follow wherever she leads me. I hope this will satisfy you all."

Miss Hogg laughed, promised to look after Tom, and every one enjoyed the joke.

Mrs. Hogg smiled, for she knew that unless Tom was an extraordinarily good rider he would be no match for Mamie. She admired her nephew very much, and was pleased to see the growing friendship between him and her daughter, though she often wondered what her husband

would say, for he had an antipathy for the Russells quite unaccountable, for they had never troubled him in any way, never asked him for a favor; had never come to visit him, and he had never visited them, and no reasoning of his wife could alter his mind. The fact was, though he had taken great care to hide it, that with all his money he felt himself their inferior, and he knew that his way of making money would not have been approved by them had they known it; and he had found them too refined and quiet in their manners and speech. He was a bully and very arrogant and overbearing to those who were under him, or less rich than he was, and he would have borne any amount of insult if money was to be made by it. His English was of the lowest order, mixed with American slang, and he was a braggart. He had fallen in love with Sophy Russell as much as a man of his kind could do. She had come to New York with some friends at Christmas time, and at one of the crossings had very nearly been run over by a beer wagon; he had rushed up and caught her in his arms just in time to save her life, and Miss Russell, seeing the danger she had escaped, and, finding herself in the arms of a strange young man, had fainted. Mr. Hogg had helped her into a cab which had been called by her friends, and had noticed what a pretty girl she was and what a fine complexion she had. She was not a New Yorker, that was evident. He heard the address given to the cabman and promised himself to call there. Miss Russell's friends thanked him and invited him to call on them; he had done so, and in time had gone to visit the Russell family, proposed to Sophy, and eventually married her; but as soon as they were married he made her understand that he would have none of her people visit him, but if she chose to go and visit them now and then, not too often, he would not object. He had been good to her, and had allowed her as much money as she had wished for. He dearly loved his daughter, but hated the Russells, and so Mamie had always been told by him that her mother's people were fools and as poor as rats.

As for her mother, she had never discussed them until Mamie had asked her about them, and this visit had followed. What a pleasant surprise these relatives had been to her, and how strange that she should have fallen

in love with her cousin Tom! In fact, she loved them all; she had never been so happy in all her life; she almost forgot her revenge on Lady Montgomery, and she now wished that she had not taken Lady Florence, for she did not see her way clear, but she made up her mind to confide in Tom; not now, but later on; should he ever propose to her she would tell him everything before accepting him. These thoughts sometimes came into her mind; they knew that they loved each other, and that fact was also clear to all the other members of the family except John, who had no thoughts of love, but enjoyed all the fun, and longed to see the race between his brother and his cousin. He wanted to bet five dollars on Mamie, but no one would take his bet, and he felt very much injured.

At last Saturday came; he was all excitement and would have liked to see the horses ready at least two hours before the time. He wanted Mamie to dress immediately after dinner, and in this good old farmhouse the dinner hour was twelve o'clock. Tom was not expected before three, and the race would not occupy more than an hour at most, so it had been arranged that they would start at four sharp. John kept looking at the big old clock, and he said more than once that he was sure it was slow, or perhaps had stopped altogether; then he would run to the stables to see if the horses were in good trim; he had brushed them himself till they shone like silk.

At last Tom was seen coming down the avenue, and John ran in to tell cousin Mamie, but was told by Julia that she had gone upstairs to dress. He waited awhile but not seeing her come downstairs he ran to see if Tom was ready and found him in the stable, not dressed for the race. He exclaimed, "O, Tom, why don't you go and dress? Mamie will be down in a minute; the horses are all right; I looked after them. Shall I saddle them while you 're dressing?"

"No; time enough when I 'm dressed;" and he walked leisurely away.

Half an hour later he came down wearing tan colored gaiters, tan gloves, black velveteen suit and derby hat, and carrying the riding whip given to him by Mamie. He looked handsomer than ever. Mamie soon joined him, dressed in a black riding habit and black felt hat with a

long white plume, white gauntlets, and a white rose at her breast. She carried a silver-mounted whip. She pinned a white rose in her cousin's buttonhole, and he gallantly kissed her hand. It was the first time he had done it and it thrilled her and brought the roses to her cheeks.

Tom's eyes sparkled with happiness for he saw that his cousin was not indifferent to him. John recalled them from their reverie by saying, "The horses are at the door and grandfather and grandmother have gone up to the lookout, where we are all going as soon as you have started."

Tom examined Black Prince to see if he was all right, helped his cousin to mount, and placing the reins in her hands he murmured, "You will be careful for my sake, dear Mamie?"

And she answered, blushing, "I will, dear Tom; don't fear for me; let us go."

Tom mounted his own horse, raised his hat to the members of his family, who had assembled in front of the house to see them start, and Mamie kissed her hand to them, John calling to her, "Mind you beat him, Mamie."

"All right, John, I 'll do my best. Good-by, all;" and they went up the avenue on a trot. They were not to start for good until they reached the main road. The watchers ran up to the lookout to see the start. The lookout was at the top of the house—a large room above the thatched roof, with windows on all sides, affording a fine view of the country around. The old folks were already there enjoying the fun almost as much as the younger ones.

When Tom and Mamie reached the main road they stopped for a moment and looked back toward the house, flourished their whips for good-by, and started side by side. They were both fine riders and seemed to be equal; they sat their horses superbly, with their heads slightly bent forward; it was hard to say which would win; the horses seemed to fly; they seemed to understand that they were racing each other; Black Prince's eyes were shining brightly and were nearly double their usual size, and his nostrils were open and quivering with excitement; one could see that he was in his element, and that he did not intend to

allow the other horse to pass him. Tom's horse was more quiet, but kept his place, never allowing Black Prince to pass him, so that so far they were equal; they could be plainly seen from the lookout. The older people were the calmest of all present except Mrs. Hogg, and though she said nothing she knew very well that Mamie would play Tom a trick before the race was over. Mr. and Mrs. Russell, though they admired Mamie and were becoming fond of her, would prefer that Tom should win, and in their hearts hoped that he would do so for the honor of the Russells, but they kept their thoughts to themselves. As for Mary and Julia, they feared that Mamie would come to grief, for they knew what a dare-devil Tom was, and they were sure that he would leap some gates or hedges and laugh at his cousin for not being able to follow him.

John watched the race as if his very life depended on his cousin's winning it. "Look, look," he would say, "don't you think that Mamie will win? But why does she keep by Tom's side? Why don't she fire ahead? Black Prince can go faster than that, I know he can. O, that 's too bad, Tom 's ahead! Mamie, Mamie, why don't you go faster?" he hallooed at the top of his voice, just as if Miss Hogg could hear him at such a distance; and he danced and threw his arms about in his excitement nearly knocking off his grandmother's cap.

"Come, John, you can't stay here if you go on like that; you nearly knocked your grandmother down," said his father.

"I 'm sorry," said John, setting his grandmother's cap right, and kissing her wrinkled cheek; "did I hurt you, grandma?"

"No, child; but keep away from us old people or you will hurt us."

Tom is still ahead; Mrs. Hogg feels a little surprised; still, she knows Mamie and she can't believe that she will allow him to win.

"I tell you what it is," said Mary, "they will soon be at the toll-gate and Tom is going to leap it, I know he is, and Mamie is keeping her horse back so that he may not follow."

Yes, Mary was right; Tom was going to leap over the

gate, Mamie having asked him to do it, holding her own horse so as to see him do it. He cleared the gate splendidly.

"Look, look," cried John; "Tom has cleared the gate. Mamie, go ahead; jump, Mamie; I know you can; she's going to do it; look at her!"

Yes, she was going to leap the gate too. Black Prince stood still for a second; then, rising on his hind legs, the front ones bent at the knees, over he went. It was a grand leap.

"See how well she did it," said John. "Now she's going to shoot ahead, see if she don't;" and he was right.

Tom looked back just in time to see his cousin pass him like an arrow, flourishing her whip as she passed him with the laughing words, "Follow your leader, Tom;" and Tom did try to follow, but was soon left behind. She leaped over hedges and field gates, Tom following bravely, but never getting ahead of his cousin; still he had leaped every hedge and gate that she had, so that they were even. Miss Hogg looked for a higher gate and saw one at some distance. Would Prince be able to do it? "Shall we try, old fellow, eh?" rubbing his neck with the whip. The horse neighed as if in answer to her question. "All right, then; we're going to try;" and she made for the gate, settling herself solidly on her saddle so as not to go over her horse's head should he not clear the gate properly.

When Tom saw her make for the gate he thought, "Surely she is not going to try that; she will never do it; why, it is more than five feet; she'll break her neck."

And in the lookout they were all excitement. At every leap John had cried, "Did you ever see such a leap? Bravo, Mamie!"

"You may as well say, 'Bravo, Tom,'" said Mrs. Hogg, "for Tom has leaped too."

"O, but here comes a stunner," said John; "she's going to jump Farmer Dean's gate; it's a five footer; she'll do it; I know she will; there she goes, right over. Black Prince has come to his knees, but Mamie is not thrown; she's got him up again. Here comes Tom; Mamie is waiting to see how he is going to do it; he'll never do it; why, it was as much as Black Prince could do, and the gate must have grazed his stomach or he would never have

fallen on his knees as he did. How could Mamie keep her seat? I don't understand; and how quick she had him on his feet again, patting his neck as if to say, 'You have done well, old fellow!' But look at Tom; his horse won't leap; he 's trying again, and urging him, but it 's no use; the poor fellow can't do it or he would."

John had a soft heart and could not bear to see anything hurt. The horse seemed on the point of jumping —at least he looked as if he were going to try it—but when near enough to take the leap he had refused, and when urged with the whip he had turned round so quickly and kicked at the gate that if Tom had not been a good horseman he would have been thrown; but he kept his seat while the horse carried him some distance at a furious gallop. The horse had done his best and was angry at being beaten to make him do what he felt he could not do.

"Now, Black Prince," said Miss Hogg, "we must go back the way we came in; you must give a better leap; you know that we very nearly came to grief, you and I; shall we try? Now that you know the gate you will do it better;" and galloping some distance, she turned her horse's head toward the gate again.

"Why," cried John, "she is going to leap back into the road, and Tom is hurrying back to see her; now for it!"

This time Black Prince cleared the gate splendidly, landing on his forefeet without touching the gate. Tom was by her side in a moment and seemed to be kissing her hand.

"Whatever is Tom up to?" cried John; "he 's kissing Mamie's hand because she has beaten him. Well, I can't understand that, can you?" turning to those whose only answer was a hearty laugh. "Well, I don't see why you should all laugh at me; what have I said that 's so funny?" but he received no other answer than another peal of laughter.

Tom had forgotten that he could be seen from the house when he kissed Mamie's hand.

"Well, what are they going to do now?" said John when he saw that no one would enlighten him on the subject; "they seem to be at a standstill. Tom has kissed

Mamie's hand and Mamie is kissing her horse's neck; there 's no fun in that."

However, they soon turned their horse's heads, and they walked them towards home, seemingly conversing.

"Are n't they going to race any more?" said John.

"Why, you want too much, my boy," said his father; "they must be tired."

"No, they 're not; and they 're going to race again; look at them."

Yes, they were galloping; they both leaped the toll-gate together, and then the race began in earnest. Mamie went ahead steadily increasing the distance between them; Tom's horse seemed to have lost courage; the whip had disheartened him, and though he was going at a good pace he seemed to understand that he would not reach Black Prince, even if he did his best. If he had been an English horse he would not have lost courage, but would have done his best to the last. Still, I must say here that a whip should never be used on a good horse. Urge him by kindness, not by blows; he would be as proud to be the winner as you would be to have him win, and he will do his best if there is any good blood in him.

Mamie passed the farmhouse in triumph and then waited for Tom; she could see everybody on the lookout waving handkerchiefs at her, and John's voice could be heard calling, "Bravo, Mamie! I knew you would win."

Tom caught up with his cousin, and they walked their horses side by side. When they reached the house the family was assembled to receive them, and they were loud in Mamie's praises. John asked to be allowed to kiss her because she was a brick; Mamie gave him a hearty kiss, and said he was a naughty boy for having wished her to win and poor Tom to lose. Tom said he did n't mind it in the least, but still he thought that if John had a kiss he ought to have one too to repay him for having lost his race. Mamie laughed and said that it was not in the agreement that the winner should kiss the loser, and that he must not expect it, and John made a finish by saying, "Cousin Mamie, give him your hand to kiss; we saw him kissing it after you had leaped the gate for the second time." Every one laughed and Mamie blushed and ran upstairs, while Tom looked embarrassed for a moment, and

then smiled and said that some people could see too far to be agreeable to others.

"Indeed," said Mary, mischievously, "we enjoyed the joke immensely."

Tom had to beat a retreat, for everybody joked him without mercy; and he promised himself that the next time he kissed his cousin's hand it would not be in sight of the lookout, which he had entirely forgotten at the time.

Months passed away, during which they enjoyed picnics and long rides in the country with some of the neighboring farmers, and Mrs. Hogg said that she felt like a young girl again. She wished Isabelle was with them for she was sure she would enjoy all their innocent pleasures. Her mother said, "You must send her to us when you get back, and come yourself, if possible, and, my dear Sophy, you will have to get around your husband, for you can see how matters stand between Mamie and Tom. I never saw young people more fond of each other than these two are."

"I am afraid to think of it, mother; I like Tom, and nothing would please me better than to see him Mamie's husband; but how is it to be managed? I think I'll let Mamie manage her own business; she has a strong will of her own, and she loves Tom, anyone can see that, and she is not going to lose him for a whim of her father's. I won't say anything until I am obliged to."

But one morning their pleasure came to an end. A letter was received from Mr. Hogg asking them if they meant to stay there until doomsday, and saying that if they were not back home in less than a week he would come and fetch them.

"Let him come," said the Russells; "we will give him such a welcome that he won't dare scold us for keeping you with us so long."

"I dare not," said Mrs. Hogg. "It is bad enough for us to have stayed away so long, but were he to see how matters stand between Tom and Mamie he might say and do things that could never be forgotten by you, and it would ruin their future happiness; we must go this week, and trust to Mamie to manage her father in regard to Tom."

Preparations were made for their departure, and it was with regret on both sides that they parted. Mrs.

and Miss Hogg felt deeply mortified not to be able to invite their kind relatives to return their visit.

"Still," said Mrs Hogg, "when you come to New York I want you to let me know; the house in Clinton avenue, Brooklyn, is mine, and surely I can receive you there; I prefer it to our grander one in Fifth Avenue, New York. Don't say no," she continued, as she saw a refusal written on every face. "I shall tell my husband what I am doing, and who knows—he may come round; and to insure the future happiness of our children we must not let our pride stand in the way."

The old people said she was right; that they must try to make friends with Mr. Hogg at any cost to their pride.

The young people felt the parting deeply and told Mamie again and again that she must soon make them another visit. Tom said he had some law business that required his presence in New York soon and he would manage to see his aunt and cousin during his stay there. The day before the departure Tom and Mamie had a ride by themselves and came back looking exceedingly happy.

The next day Mrs. Hogg bade her father and mother good-by with tears in her eyes, promising to come again soon, and thanking them for their kind welcome after so many years of neglect on her part. The old people could only clasp her in their arms and weep over her.

When it was Mamie's turn to say good-by her grandmother said to her, "My dear, you love Tom; don't blush; he loves you also; our old eyes have seen it from the first. Now mind that you let no one come between you and him; don't break his heart, my dear; there are many happy days before you both if you follow my advice."

"I 'll never break Tom's heart," she replied, "for it would be breaking my own at the same time. O, grandma, you don't know how I love him;" and she hid her face in the old lady's neck.

"Yes, I do, dear; I only loved once; I married the man I loved, and my life has been one long, beautiful summer. I wish you the same happiness, and you will find it with Tom, my dear;" and Mamie had kissed her dear old grandmother with tears in her eyes, but great joy in her heart.

Her grandfather kissed her, saying, "Bless you, my

child; there are bright days in store for you; good-by for a little while. Tom will soon bring you back to us again."

Yes, all this would have come to pass if Miss Hogg had not taken Lady Florence de La Rochefoucauld, Lady Montgomery's niece. She would be the stumbling block to their happiness, not Mr. Hogg, whom they all feared.

Many of my readers who have left their youth far behind them will agree with me that it is often their own deeds, past deeds done in fun or thoughtlessness, that later, when almost forgotten, have confronted them at the moment when the gate of earthly paradise seemed open to them, and side by side with their loved one they were entering the paradise. Those deeds then no longer look like fun, but more like crime, for we feel that they will part us from the beloved one when known, and the gate of earthly paradise will be forever closed to us, and will leave us groping in darkness for the jewel that we have lost and will never find again, for he or she has lost faith in us, and without faith there can be no true love. How many marriages can trace their unhappiness to deeds committed before marriage, some very innocently, but which look like guilt through circumstances that cannot be explained, or that have been denied in the first fear of discovery, and the denial has added weight and guilt to the deed which may amount to very little in itself.

Let no one hope to mend matters by an untruth; let us never do a deed, or say a word, that we may have to blush for in after years. And should we have the misfortune to have already done so let us not deceive anyone by a denial and a falsehood, which will only make us appear more unworthy in their eyes and will not deceive them; for it is better to be a repentant sinner than a hardened one.

But let us return to Miss Hogg, who parted from Tom with a great weight on her mind. She was greatly changed since she had been with her mother's people and had fallen in love with Tom, and she feared what he would say when he knew what she had done; he would never help her, she was sure of that. Would he marry her and remain silent? She doubted it. Would he betray her and write to Lady Montgomery? No, he would never do that. Then what would he do? He loved her so dearly, would

he, could he, give her up? "O, no, not that; I would die if he ceased to love me, my own dear Tom." And tears came to her eyes as all these painful thoughts came to her mind, and when she parted from him on the railway platform her eyes met his with so much of sorrow and love in them that he could not understand her and he threw his arm around her and for a moment pressed her to his heart as he gave her the parting kiss, saying, "I will see you next week, dearest Mamie; I am coming to New York;" and having wished his aunt good-by he helped them into one of the carriages. He remained on the platform until the train left, then returned home whistling a merry tune, for he felt happy in the knowledge of his cousin's love for him. He had no fear for the future; his uncle, be he ever so boorish, loved his child, and surely would be pleased to see her happy even if it took some time to open his eyes to the fact; they could wait, as long as they saw each other sometimes.

As for Miss Hogg, she did not feel so hopeful; it was not her father she feared; she well knew that he would have to come round in time; but it was what she had done that seemed to place a barrier between Tom and herself; and, O, how dear he had become to her! He was the best part of herself; she could never give him up; and she felt sure that were he to know of Lady Florence's abduction by her he would despise her. and a heavy sigh escaped her.

"What's the matter, Mamie?" asked her mother, in surprise; "are you ill, my dear?"

"No, ma, I'm all right;" and she laughed and called herself a fool for her foreboding of evil. Where there's a will there must be a way, and she would find it. "Well, ma, I feel sad at leaving our people; we've had a grand time, haven't we now?"

"Yes, my dear, I was never so happy in all my life before. I was so pleased to find my father and mother still living, and my brother and his wife were so good to me; in fact, they all did everything that they possibly could to make us feel at home."

"And they succeeded;" said Mamie; "for I, like you, have never been half so happy in all my life as I have been these last two months."

"I know it, my dear, but what will your father say? that 's what troubles me."

"Well, ma, don't trouble, and above all things don't you mention Tom to him; don't say more than you can help about the Russells; it will be far better; for you would be sure to talk about Tom. I have a plan; you leave me to work it."

"Well, Mamie, I am much relieved by your words. I had feared that you expected me to make it all right with him."

"No, ma; not now at least; I 'll try my plan first."

They reached New York in due time and found their carriage waiting at the Grand Central Depot, Forty-second street, and were surprised to find that Mr. Hogg himself had come to meet them, and looked overjoyed at having them back again.

"Poor pa," said Miss Hogg, "you have felt lonely, have n't you?"

"Yes, my gal, and I hate those Russells more than ever for keeping you so long away from your dad."

"I 'm sorry, pa; if we had known that you wanted us back so bad we would have come; would n't we, ma?"

"Certainly my dear, but I thought your father would be pleased to be alone for a time for he always says that we trouble him a great deal in his busy times."

"O, that 's all very well," said the old man, "but then I don't always mean what I say; and after a busy day I like to find my wife and daughter at home to cheer me up. Well, Mamie, you don't seem to say much about the Russells, eh? they 're not our style, are they?"

"No, pa, not at all."

"That 's my own gal; I ought to have known that she would n't turn away from her old dad for all the beggarly Russells in the world."

"I 'll never turn against you, pa; but here we are at home," as the carriage stopped at their mansion in Fifth Avenue.

Poor Mrs. Hogg felt very much hurt at the manner in which Mr. Hogg spoke of her family, and was surprised that Mamie took it so tamely; but when she looked at her daughter she saw that she suffered as much as she herself did, and from the red spots in her cheeks and her flashing

black eyes it was evident that she had hard work to retain her indignation; and when her father had said that the Russells were not their style her answer had come hard and sharp, and with an angry flash in her black eyes that her father had supposed was contempt for the Russells; it had pleased him; he had called her his own gal, regardless of his wife's feelings. He was kind to his wife personally, wanted her all to himself, and was jealous of her affection for her people; she had become used to it, and she held her peace whenever he spoke of the Russells, which, happily for his wife, was not often. On this occasion he did not even ask how they were; nor was he aware that there were young people in the old home; he had no idea of a young man named Tom being there or he would soon have guessed the reason of their long stay there and would have investigated the matter and made it unpleasant for both his wife and his daughter.

After dinner he asked: "Any good business to be done down there, anything worth speculating in, my gal, eh? I don't ask your mother for she has no head for business, nor her family neither, or they would n't be so devilish poor, would they, my gal?"

"O, pa, I can't say that they are poor!"

"What, don't they milk their cows themselves? They used to when I was there, and your mother did when a gal. You, my dear, never did such a thing in all your life."

Mamie laughed heartily at the recollection of trying to milk the cow and the consequences, and her mother joining in, was really a stunner for Mr. Hogg, who could not see the joke, and was beginning to look angry, when Mamie said, "I saw a good investment; I spoke to a lawyer about it, and he 's coming to see you on the subject very soon, he told me."

"Well, my gal, if it 's a good investment it has to be snapped up or it will be gone; if it 's not, then it 's no good; those lawyers are such rogues you can't trust them. What concern is it—a factory, or tenement houses with lots of taxes on them, eh?"

"No, pa, it 's a lovely farm, with a fine, stylish house on it; they are asking twenty-five thousand dollars for it, but the young lawyer told me that he would undertake

to bring them down to twenty thousand dollars for cash, and that it would bring from ten to fourteen per cent."

"Ah, ha, a young lawyer, eh! And why does he feel so interested in your having the farm, eh, my gal? Your father ain't a fool."

"O, don't talk nonsense, pa. Do you wish to buy the farm or not? He told me the Russells would like to buy it as it joins theirs, but that he feared that they did n't have enough to pay cash, and of course it would no longer be a bargain if they had to pay $25,000 for it; still, they want it so badly that he thinks they will come to some arrangement very soon if no better offer is made. That 's the reason I 'm telling you all about it before it 's too late. What do you say, pa? I 'd like it very much myself."

"Well, my gal, you shall have it; I 'll snap it up before the Russells can say Jack Robinson, and show them that I have brass. Who is this young lawyer?"

"It 's Mr. Thomas; he will be in New York next week and will call at your office if you wish it."

"Certainly, my gal, I wish it. I long to have that farm since the Russells want it."

Mrs. Hogg looked at her daughter in surprise and thought: "She has a great deal of her father's deceitfulness and will manage him when I could n't, for I would not entrap him as she is going to do. How will he take it when he finds out the truth and how his daughter has taken him in? Still, she will succeed where I should fail. But how about Tom, will he like it?" and wishing to mend matters, she said: "My dear husband, I would like to say a few words to you about my people; they received us as well as they possibly could, and should any of them come to New York I wish them to come to me, and not go to a hotel like strangers."

"O, I thought as much; we 're going to have the whole gang here now that you 've been to see them, just like flies around a pot of honey. Why did n't you pay them for what they did for you? Pay them, but don't have them here; I tell you I won't have it;" and he was flushed with anger, almost beside himself with passion. Miss Hogg signaled to her mother with her eyes to drop the subject, but to no effect; the mild little woman saw that now was her time to assert herself, and for the future

happiness of her daughter she continued: "My people are not of those who would receive money for what they did for us, and I would never dare to make them the offer."

"More fools they; if I was poor and had rich relations willing to pay I 'd make them come down with a good, round sum, I can tell you, and laugh at them in my sleeve. But I tell you once for all I won't have them here."

"I have no intention of having them come here, James."

"Well, what do you mean? I 'm blest if I can understand you; you just said you would have them here and now you go back on your word."

"If you had allowed me to explain myself without flying into such a rage, I was going to say that should any of them come here I will receive them in my house in Brooklyn, and they will not trouble you in the least and will never set foot in this house unless you invite them yourself."

"O, well, I 'll bet they 'll have to wait a long time if they wait till I tell them to come; but if you want them so bad you can receive the whole gang of them in that barrack in Clinton avenue."

"Thank you, James; they will be satisfied; it is a very handsome barrack—the finest in the avenue—and it was good of you to give it to me, my dear; and though it is mine by law I would never think of receiving anyone there unless you knew it and gave your consent."

"Well, I must say, Sophy, that if you 're not over clever you are frank and truthful and have never deceived me by word or deed; and there are few chaps here in New York who can say as much of their wives." And he quite recovered his temper, and said: "Do as you like, Sophy, but don't ask me to have them here; and I 'll tell you what—if they 're shabby get them some togs; don't go about with shabbily dressed folks. When are they coming?"

"O, my dear, I don't know; they may never come; still, in case they do, I thought it best to have an understanding. Now we will drop the subject."

Miss Hogg looked at her mother and thought, "How well she has managed pa, and without a word of deceit!" She saw her mother in a different light to what she had some months before; and she thought that, though not a grand lady, she was far from being vulgar, and that she her-

self had far more cause for being ashamed of her father than of her mother or her mother's people. And Tom, dear Tom, how handsome he was, and so gentlemanly! There was no man in New York who could hold a candle to him; he was perfectly English.

Mrs. Hogg wrote to her people, telling them that with her husband's consent she would receive them in her house in Brooklyn whenever they wished to come; that she hoped soon to see some of them; that Tom was coming right away to see her husband about the purchase of the farm; he had not been told that Tom was his nephew, only a lawyer, a Mr. Thomas,—Mamie had told her father, not she.

"Well," said Mr. Russell, when he had read the letter, "what are you going to do, Tom?"

"I think I had better take Mr. Godfrey with me and let him arrange matters with my uncle; I hate to make his acquaintance under false pretenses; still, I will go with my partner as his clerk, for I want very much to see what kind of man my uncle is."

CHAPTER LV.

A FEW days later Mr. Hogg was sitting at his desk in his office in Wall street examining what mortgages he would foreclose so as to leave himself a good profit, when his office door opened and his wife and daughter walked in, all smiles, and followed by two gentlemen—lawyers, they seemed to him. Miss Hogg took it upon herself to introduce them: "My dear father, allow me to present to you Mr. Godfrey, a lawyer, and his partner, Mr. Thomas; they have come about the farm." And turning to the two lawyers, she said, "My father, Mr. Hogg."

Mr. Hogg looked hard at the two young men, and they looked at him. They both knew him to be a millionaire. Did he look like one in his shabby, shiny office coat, his not over-clean shoes, his shining bald head, big stomach, short legs, cunning, unscrupulous eyes? Tom was not favorably impressed by the appearance of his future father-in-law, but, strange to say, Mr. Hogg took to Tom at first sight, and winked at Mamie, who became very rosy, and said, "Now, pa, mind that you buy that farm in my name; you can have all the profit of it. but let it be purchased in my name."

"Well, I guess you know what 's good, eh, to come, so to speak, and grab twenty thousand dollars out of my pocket as if it was a mere nothing, eh, miss?" and he laughed merrily.

"Well," said his wife, "you have only one child, and she will have everything one day."

"O, let the day be far off," said Mamie. "Now let us go, ma; we 're only in the way. Will you come back to dinner, pa?"

"Yes, of course, my dear; and will bring back these two gentlemen with me, so be sure to be at home."

"All right, pa; good-by;" and mother and daughter left the office and re-entered their carriage.

Miss Hogg said, "Did n't I catch pa well, eh, when I asked him if he was coming to dinner? He had to invite

Tom and his partner; he could n't back out, they being strangers here."

"Yes, my dear, but I doubt if Tom will come."

"O, now come; that would be too bad, after me taking all that trouble too; surely if he loves me he 'll come."

"There 's no doubt that Tom loves you, Mamie, but he 's a true Russell; truthful and honorable; and unless I am very much mistaken he will not deceive your father, and you ought to like him the better for it, my dear, and not ask him to do what you know he cannot do with honor."

"Well, ma, I differ with you; I know he will come; all 's fair in love, you know."

"No, my dear, not for honest people; they can break their hearts, but cannot deceive. Don't let us say any more about it, Mamie; you take after your father more than after the Russells; still, you have a great deal of Russell blood in your veins; they all said so down there."

"Well, ma, I don't like to deceive pa, but I love Tom, and I wanted them to know one another; and I know that had I said, 'Pa, here 's Tom Russell come to see you,' he would not even have looked at him but would have flown into a towering passion, insulted him and shown him the door too. You know that is true."

"Yes, that is quite true, my dear, so I 'll not say another word, but leave it to Tom to decide what is best for you two."

"Did you see pa wink at me after looking at Tom? Why, he made me blush, and his partner seemed to enjoy the scene immensely."

"Yes, I saw and felt humiliated that my husband should act as he did; and I also saw that he took a liking to Tom at once and I was very pleased to see it, my dear. Now if Tom were not a Russell everything would go smooth with you two; but God help Tom when it is discovered that he is one!"

"Indeed," said Miss Hogg, "and did n't my father marry a Russell, and why should n't I? It proves that we have the same taste;" and she laughed heartily at her own joke. "But here comes pa, and—yes, it is true, Tom and his partner. Did n't I tell you that he 'd come?" Mrs. Hogg joined her daughter at the window just in time to see her husband and his two guests alight from a cab.

That Tom should have come surprised her; he looked so frank. How could his love for Mamie make him resort to deceit for her sake? Love, like madness, affects people differently, according to their natures. Some even sacrifice honor to love! could Tom Russell do it with that frank, honest face of his? She hardly knew how to receive him, for she felt that she was making of herself an accomplice to the deceit, and she looked reproachfully at Tom. Holding out her hand to Mr. Godfrey, she said, "I am pleased that you have come, and your partner also," holding out her hand to Tom, but she could not bring herself to say "Mr. Thomas."

Her husband looked at her and laughed heartily, saying, "Here is a wife who will never deceive her husband." Mrs. Hogg blushed at such an open compliment, and Miss Hogg looked uneasy, for she knew that something else was coming. Had her father discovered that he was Tom Russell, or had Tom been fool enough to tell her father who he really was? No, for they seemed on good terms, and had he done so he would not be sitting there now, nor would her father have laughed as he was doing. What had happened then? She was not kept long in suspense, for turning to her he said, "So, my gal, you thought of stealing a march on your old dad, eh? with your Mr. Thomas when you knew all along that he was Tom Russell, some relation to the Russells where you have just been with your mother—how nearly related to him I have not asked him; but he 's a trump, and knowing somehow that I 'm not partial to the Russells he would n't come here to dinner under the name of Mr. Thomas, and he told his reasons for refusing, saying that very likely I was not aware that he was related to the Russells, and that in fact his name was Tom Russell, and that he was from Jefferson City. And I said, 'Russell or no Russell, you 're a peach, and the devil take me if you don't have your dinner at my table this day,' and you see I 'm going to keep my word; ain't I, Tom?" giving him a slap on the shoulder that nearly threw him off his chair. "You must know, Tom, that that gal 's the very devil with the male sex, and is always playing tricks on her dad. She brought us a divine some time ago and told us that his name was the Rev. Brownlow. If ever a fellow was mad after a gal he was, the old crank, for he must have

been about forty years old. He got engaged to Mamie—but, but—"

"Pa, do you think that all this nonsense can interest these gentlemen who are strangers to us?"

"O, it 's all right, my gal; you need taking down a peg, for you played me a trick then and were about to play me another now with your Mr. Thomas, indeed."

Miss Hogg left the room in a hurry, with a very red face, as she saw that her father was determined to expose Walgrave; her mother had already left the room before her father began to relate the dreadful affair, or she might have turned the conversation from this unpleasant topic. There was a look of pain and surprise in Tom's honest blue eyes that made her heart ache, while in Mr. Godfrey's eyes there was an amused look. He seemed to enjoy Mr. Hogg's vulgarity of speech.

"Well," continued Mr. Hogg, "we had a party to celebrate the engagement; it was a grand affair, for I never do things by half. Before we sat down to dinner she up and told us that the Rev. Brownlow was no other than the famous English detective, Walgrave, and it must have been true, for he had n't a word to say in his own defense. Mamie showed him the door. The papers were full of it the next day, and when I asked Mamie what she meant by having played me such a dirty trick—pretending to be engaged and making a fool of me—she said that it was all for fun, and that she knew all along that he was Walgrave, the detective, and that she had no intention of marrying him."

Mr. Godfrey laughed and said that Miss Hogg, being a rich heiress, could say and do many things that would appear strange in any other young lady, and that she was full of life and loved fun and mischief. Tom said not a word, but thought, Could Mamie do such a thing for the love of mischief? No; it looked to him more like revenge. Mr. Hogg looked rather sheepish after delivering himself of this long speech, for he saw when too late that he had done wrong in exposing his daughter to these two strange gentlemen, and one of them a Russell, who would go and babble about it on his return home.

Dinner was announced, and Mrs. Hogg, having been told by Mamie what her father had been saying, tried to

make every one comfortable, and succeeded as far as her husband and Mr. Godfrey were concerned; but as for Tom and Mamie, who ought to have been so happy sitting at the same table in her father's house, they looked anything but happy. Mr. Hogg discussed the farm that he had purchased for his "gal" and how it would annoy the other Russells when they heard of it. Mr. Godfrey said that he would have to return to Jefferson City the next day, and that as soon as the deeds were made out he would send them, and that Mr. Hogg had done a good day's work in buying that farm. Tom asked him if he intended to let it or send some of his people to work it.

"O, I 'll have to ask Mamie; it 's hers. What are you going to do about it, my gal, eh?"

"Well, pa, I think I will discuss the matter with Mr. Russell, who was the first to show me the farm."

"You had better do so, and as his partner is going back to-morrow perhaps he can be spared for a few days and stay here to arrange matters with you."

"Yes, that would be best," said Mamie, who longed to talk to her cousin on other subjects than the farm; so she said, "Will you stay to oblige me, Mr. Russell?"

"Certainly, Miss Hogg. I am at your disposal as long as you want me, and I will be pleased to discuss the matter with you."

Mrs. and Miss Hogg soon left the table and went to the drawing-room, where Tom shortly followed them. He met his aunt, who said, "Now, Tom, don't let anything your uncle has said make you unhappy; he has a way of bringing up past events and mixing them up so that at first sight they look almost criminal, but when explained, prove to be a mere trifle. Mamie is very unhappy about his telling you what he did; you know how she values your good opinion; go to her in the next room, hear her explanation and discuss the farm, and let me see you both looking happy at tea time; go, my boy, and don't let any escapade of Mamie's stand between you and her; she 's a good girl, Tom, and when you know her better you 'll agree with me."

"I believe you, Aunt Sophy. Mamie is very dear to me; nothing less than a dishonorable action, such as I am sure she could not be guilty of, could part us."

"I know, my boy; and it was Walgrave's fault more than hers; he had made love to her on the steamer, in the disguise of a minister; she knew him to be a detective, and that he was only amusing himself; so she flirted with him until the poor fellow began to love her in earnest; then she resolved to punish him by encouraging him, which she certainly ought not to have done. I never liked the man myself. Well, he grew more fond of her every day; there was no make-believe there. Then came that party that we gave in good faith to celebrate Mamie's engagement; then she unmasked him by saying, 'You all know that this feast is to celebrate my engagement with the Rev. Sidney Brownlow, and no other; well, this man is not the Rev. Sidney Brownlow, but Mr. Walgrave, an English detective, who has come here under false pretenses to marry an heiress.' And of course it made a sensation; her father flew into a terrible passion and Walgrave left the house saying, 'I did not want to marry your daughter for her money, but because I love her.' I believed him; he looked heartbroken, and as pale as death. That 's all, Tom; there was no love-making between them; you may believe me."

"I do, Aunt Sophy, and I am glad that you have told me instead of Mamie. I will not ask her for any explanation, nor allow her to say a word about it. Now I am going to her to arrange about the farm."

He went into the room, where he found his cousin looking rather embarrassed; he placed his arm around her waist, drew her towards him and kissed her forehead, saying, "Look up and smile, Mamie, my love; your mother has told me all about the trick you played the detective, and that you never loved him."

"No, Tom, never think for a moment that I ever loved anyone but your own dear self. I never knew what it is to love until I met you;" and there was so much truth and love in her eyes as she looked up at him with her head on his shoulder that he could not doubt her.

"Dear Mamie, you have made me very happy; you also are my first love. Come, let us sit down and discuss your farm and tell me what you want done with it."

They sat down and discussed it. Her plan was that

Jerry and his wife would take charge of it, Jerry's mother teaching Katy all that a good housewife ought to know, and that she herself would visit them and have a jolly time there. When Mrs. Hogg called them for tea she saw that the cloud had disappeared and that her daughter was happy once more.

Tom remained with them a week and went about with them sight-seeing. Mamie had thoroughly enjoyed his visit, closing her eyes for the time to the danger that threatened her; Tom was with her and she forgot everything else; she would not think of the barrier that really stood between them. Tom had regarded the matter as the joke of a giddy young girl and had not referred to it after the explanation that his aunt had given him in all good faith, for he knew that she was truthful, and as she had assured him that there had been no love-making between them, he made little of the rest; and it was so long ago, too, that almost everybody had forgotten it, so that he too was happy; and though he did not see his cousin very often he corresponded with her regularly, and was beginning to press his suit; he had often asked her to name the day; but though her letters were very loving, she never gave a decided answer. She had been to the farm once since Jerry and Katy were settled there. Mrs. Martin divided her time between the farm and the house in Clinton avenue but was oftener in Clinton avenue, so as to be there to receive any letters which might compromise them, and it made her life very unsettled.

Miss Hogg also lived in fear of a letter from the countess falling into other hands than hers, so that things were not pleasant for any of them. Tom had begged of Mamie to allow him to speak to her father and have the matter settled; she had promised to let him know in the course of a month, and with that he had to be content. Poor Miss Hogg was in a dreadful state of mind; she hardly knew what to do; she did n't dare to tell Tom what she had done; it seemed harder to do as time went on. O, why had she not told him when her father had exposed her? It would have been easier then; she would lose him; he would believe her deceitful to the core. O, why had she taken Lady Florence? Dare she marry him without telling

him of it? No, no; not that; he would leave her and hate her, so she must tell him. She had tried several times when alone with him to speak on the subject, but the words would n't come; they seemed to choke her; and as she looked at her handsome cousin she thought that if she should lose him she would die. "I can't give him up, and if I tell him he will despise me and turn away from me; I 'll wait a little longer;" and the longer she waited the harder it was. He could not understand her, for he could not doubt her love for him. He felt that there was something; he sometimes thought that she had a love affair of some kind and that it weighed on her mind; and when he had once mentioned it to her she had denied it so firmly and with such a show of truth and love for himself that he had believed her as she said, "Dear Tom, never think for a moment that I have ever loved anyone but yourself; you are my first and last love."

"Well, then, dear, why not name the day?"

"O, Tom, don't ask me; I can't tell you; I will some time, but not now; I wish I could;" and she looked so distressed that he had said, "Since you never loved before you saw me I am satisfied. I don't want to know what troubles you unless you wish to tell me, my own dear Mamie;" and again she had lost an opportunity of unburdening her heart to the man who so truly loved her.

Three days after Miss Hogg's return to Fifth avenue her maid told her that Mrs. Martin was asking to see her.

"Show her in at once," she exclaimed, with a feeling of fear. And she saw by Mrs. Martin's pale face that something had gone wrong. Her first thought was for Tom, and she asked, "Has anything happened to Mr. Russell?"

"No, miss, but I have a letter here, a black letter."

Miss Hogg turned very white. "Come this way;" and she led the way to a small room and locked the door. Then, letting herself fall into an easy chair, she murmured, "Give me the letter. O, my God! is she dead? I never thought of that when I took her away!" and she shivered all over. "Open the letter; I can't, my hands tremble so."

Mrs. Martin opened it and held it before her. It was not in the handwriting of the countess, and as she read

it the color returned to her face and she ceased trembling. "Thank God, it is not she who is dead, but the poor countess. When did you get this letter?"

The day you left us. It was forwarded to me from Clinton avenue, and as it was a black letter I have come as fast as I could to bring it to you. It gave us all a great shock. Katy fainted at the sight of it. I must go back as soon as you can spare me."

"I can't spare you, so you had better send a telegram telling them that the old lady is dead and that you must leave for Europe at once; they will understand."

"But who wrote the letter, miss?"

"I did n't look;" and as she reopened the letter and looked at the signature she turned pale again and exclaimed, "That lawyer! O, I knew that trouble would come! Why did I ever give the countess his address? I must have been mad."

"But what lawyer, Miss Hogg, if I may ask?"

"Why, Mr. Bridgewell."

"What! the one who got you the four thousand pounds from Lady Montgomery? O, Miss Hogg, we are lost! He must have guessed that the young lady in the care of the countess is Lady Florence, and he must have given the information at once to Lady Montgomery."

"I don't see that, Mrs. Martin; my name has not been mentioned to him by the countess, she never having heard it. You remember that I presented myself to her as the child's aunt, under the name of Mrs. Reynolds, residing in Australia."

"Yes, yes, I had forgotten; but what am I to do?"

"Send a telegram to your son first; ring the bell and send one of the servants with it."

Miss Hogg wrote the telegram and gave it to the maid who answered the bell.

"Now, Mrs. Martin, go to Clinton avenue, get a few things and leave for Havre this afternoon. A steamer leaves at three o'clock; go straight to the countess's home and tell them that you have come for Isabelle Reynolds and that you are going to take her to Australia. Pay them well, and don't delay, but leave at once for America, take her to the farm and let me know when you get there."

"But they will find us out in no time," said poor troubled Mrs. Martin.

"No, they won't, for I 'm going to send the lawyer on the wrong track, and while he 's hunting in Australia the child can be safe at the farm, at least for some months to come; then I 'll see what is to be done later on. Now leave me and do what I tell you; here is more money than you will require. I must write to the lawyer without delay."

CHAPTER LVI.

Miss Hogg felt that the web was closing around her; she had had a terrible shock that morning when she had seen the black letter, for she had felt sure that it announced Lady Florence's death. How she wished over and over again that she had not done what she had! "O, if I could only see my way clear to send her back to her people! I must think it over; it will have to be done, but how? That lawyer is cute. If he knew that I was mixed up in the affair of the countess he would guess at once; but how can he? I 'm glad that I did n't trust him. Katy was right; I was mad to give the countess his address. I must write at once, for he will be expecting a letter in a week. By that time Jerry's mother will be there and in possession of the child. I must send him on the wrong track. O, Tom, Tom, what will you say when you know all this? Will you ever forgive me, my love, my love?"

She wrote to Mr. Bridgewell that Mrs. Reynolds and her servant, Mrs. Martin, had returned to Australia over a month ago, and had so apprised the countess. Mrs. Reynolds had asked her, the writer, to open any letters that might come for her after her departure, and having done so in this instance she had been greatly shocked to find that it announced the death of the Countess de Pascalina, who, she believed, was a relative of the Reynoldses. Their address in Australia was No. 7 Sidney street, Melbourne, where he could write and give them the sad news; signing herself "Amelia Sanford (Mrs.), No. — Clinton Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y." She mailed the letter herself and awaited results with great anxiety. She had not mentioned the child to him, for she thought it best not to seem to know too much about the countess and the Reynoldses, not knowing what kind of letter had been sent him.

Mr. Bridgewell received her letter in due time, not suspecting in the least that it came from Miss Hogg; and he wrote to Mr. Reynolds in Australia, asking if his

daughter was to be sent back to him or to a boarding school, and quietly awaited the answer; he felt no interest in the matter. He had been surprised to receive a letter from the governess employed by the countess, stating that the countess was dead, and that she, the governess, had found his address as follows: "Mrs. Reynolds, care of Mrs. Martin, Clinton Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y.," and that she knew that Mrs. Reynolds was related to the young lady, and he, being a lawyer, she thought it better to place the matter in his hands, as the countess, before her death, had instructed her to do; and though he had been surprised that the countess, of whom he had never heard, should have his address, still, as he was a lawyer of some repute, she might have heard of him. So he answered at once that he would write to Mrs. Reynolds in America. He had done so, and on learning that they had left for Australia he wrote there at once and leisurely awaited the answer. Had he known that Miss Hogg was at the bottom of it he would not have allowed the grass to grow under his feet; he would soon have been in a position to claim the large reward. Had he only gone to the countess how soon he would have unraveled the mystery! But as no fees had been sent, he took no trouble in the matter. But as time passed and no answer came to his letter, after waiting a month over the time required to receive one, and the return of his own letter marked "No one of the name of Reynolds at given address," he thought it strange; and also that the governess had not written again, though he had forgotten to inform her that the Reynoldses had returned to Australia. He wrote at once to the governess and received an answer from the housekeeper stating that the governess had left as soon as the young lady had been removed by her old nurse, Mrs. Martin, and that she had no idea where she had gone. As for the young lady, she had returned to Australia nearly three months ago.

The lawyer was puzzled; he had never before had to do with such queer business; sometimes he thought he had been made a fool of; then he would read the governess's letter; that was genuine and to the point and looked honest; then he would read the American letter and ponder over it, and would conclude that it was not frank; it told him that Mrs. Martin had returned to Australia with

her mistress, but not a word was said about the countess's niece. It looked to him to be too disinterested in that quarter to be true. Then the housekeeper's letter said that Mrs. Martin had taken the child back to Australia; if that was true she had not gone there previously; there was a screw loose somewhere, for the letters did not agree. However, it did not concern him; still, he felt curious about the matter and promised himself to unravel this mystery later on, as he was too busy just at present; but to begin with, he would ask his bookseller to get him a directory of Brooklyn, New York; he must know who really lived at No. — Clinton avenue. Nearly three weeks elapsed before he received the book. He took it home; and after making himself comfortable he opened the directory to see who lived at No. — Clinton avenue, when he read "Hogg, Mrs." "Well, my lady, you 're a clever one, but you made a mistake when you gave my address to the countess; what your motives were in doing it is beyond me; but I have always observed that let people be ever so clever there is always a weak point in their plans that eventually brings them to grief; and your weak point, Miss Hogg, has been to give my address. And I think she must have known it, for she has not trusted me but has sent me on a wrong track, and if I had n't written again to the governess and received my letter back from Australia all would have been right with her. She has gained time, however, and a good long time; it must be four months since I received that letter from the governess—plenty of time for Miss Hogg to have found another hiding place for the young lady. Still, I am going to make some move in the matter; the reward is large and worth trying for. I must find that Walgrave and Mathew that had the case when I got that four thousand pounds from Lady Montgomery for the clever young lady. Now I am going to work on the other tack and it will go hard with me if I don't succeed. I 'll get so much proof against her that she will have to tell where Lady Florence is. You 've put your foot in it this time, Miss Hogg. I feel the detective fever in me, and I 'm going in for it."

He wrote to the chief of Scotland Yard asking him to send him Walgrave and Mathew as soon as possible. He did n't know that Walgrave had left the force. "Now,"

said he, "I shall have the two detectives at my office the first thing to-morrow morning," and he retired thinking of the big reward and the great name he was going to make for himself. He had succeeded where two of the most clever detectives had failed, and he felt himself a big man, with his name in all the newspapers.

The next day when he entered his office he found Mathew waiting to see him. Mr. Bridgewell took him into his private office, and closing the door he laughingly said to Mathew, "I have found Lady Florence."

Mathew looked at him, and only said, "Have you? Are you not the lawyer who got four thousand pounds from Lady Montgomery for your client, Miss Hogg? Have you turned against her, and do you want to betray her? I suppose you have known all along where the young lady was and that it will be very easy for you to lead us to her and so gain the reward for yourself. Is that why you have sent for me, Mr. Bridgewell? What do you want me to do? Where is the young lady?"

The lawyer had been so surprised by Mathew's accusation of conspiracy with Miss Hogg that he had been unable to interrupt him; he had never expected to be looked upon as an accomplice. At last he said, "Indeed, Mr. Mathew, you wrong me. I did get damages for Miss Hogg, it is true; she stated her case to me as an injured party, and as no proof could be brought against her, as you well know, since you yourself failed to prove the young lady to be Lady Florence, I got the money for her, but I have never seen her since that day, and she never gave me her confidence, so that I am not betraying it, as you suppose; it is only by chance that I have found out where Lady Florence has been all these years, for it is nearly five years since she disappeared."

"Well, if I have wronged you, Mr. Bridgewell, I apologize. Pray explain yourself," said Mathew, throwing himself back in his chair, ready to listen to what the lawyer had to say. When he had heard all that the reader already knows he asked, "What do you propose to do and how can I help you? I am at your service."

"Well, Mr. Mathew, don't you think that it will be best to go to America, face the brazen baggage, and make her tell where the young lady is?"

"No, sir, I do not; you don't know Miss Hogg; she 's as slippery as an eel; she would have the laugh on us. My advice is that we get all the proof we can from the late countess's servants and the young lady's governess; then, having all the proofs in our hands, we can face her and bring an action against her."

"Well, Mr. Mathew, I agree with you, for we have no ordinary woman to deal with. You will have to go and hunt the proofs, for I can't leave my business here; it is my busy time."

"All right, sir. Will you show me the American letter?"

"Here it is; what do you make of it?"

"I make this of it—that it is Miss Hogg's writing; at least I think so, for it is the same writing as the addresses I found in Jerry's cottage, which must have been written by her. Take great care of that letter; we may want it yet. I am going to Naples, and I shall follow whatever clew I can find there, and will write to you and let you know how I get on."

Mathew left him, to go and report to his chief and to take his orders.

"What!" he exclaimed, when told, "that Miss Hogg again! I really thought we were done with her; she made a wreck of Walgrave, a true and upright gentleman; she turned the tables on him and disgraced him, poor fellow! Take care, Mathew, that she does n't do the same to you. She must be the very devil himself."

"There 's no danger for me, captain," answered Mr. Mathew. "If Walgrave had n't fallen in love with her all would have been well, but I never saw a man so gone on a woman as he was on her; as you say, she wrecked his life. I believe he loves her still after all these years; she must have bewitched him, the flirt! The devil take her for all the trouble she has brought on him and on Lady Montgomery's family!"

"Amen," said the captain, "let him have her, with my blessing to boot. You, Mathew, had better leave for Naples to-morrow, and see what you can do in the matter; you know with whom you have to deal, so that you are the best man to send there, and I wish you success with that American title-hunter,—the devil take them all! Why

England is full of them; in summer time one can't go into a respectable hotel without hearing 'I guess' and 'I reckon,' and 'O, my heart, but you 're a peach!' all around you; and the loud ha, ha, ha! of the women makes a true English gentleman's blood run cold. Why can't they stay in their own country and marry, yes, marry men of their own class, and not come here to mix their vulgar blood with that of some of the best families here, and interfere with our politics too. If a stop is n't put to it they will in time try to upset the government; have a republic here, and ruin our country as they have their own, which would be a grand place if they had a different government. All the money goes in electioneering and filling the pockets of a few, and the few soon get to be millionaires, while business men go to ruin, never being sure of the morrow, as the government changes so often. There 's no stability in business, and they would wish us to imitate them. God preserve us from such a calamity! God save the queen, and preserve every crowned head! But I am getting excited; I always do when I compare our government to theirs, for what they need in America is a good head, and they don't seem able to find one. And if they did get one, they would n't allow it time to improve the country. There is always another one undermining the would-be reformer and ready to jump into his shoes as his time expires, and begin another reform of his own. That 's America in a nutshell. But I 'm done, Mathew. Go and get ready and leave early to-morrow."

"Yes, sir. I feel as you do towards the title-hunters, and Miss Hogg will find no mercy at my hands."

Having made his preparations, the thought occurred to him to go and see Walgrave on his way; he could take passage from Southampton to Havre, or Germany, and get to Naples by way of Southampton as well as by any other port, and he longed to see how Walgrave would take the news of the discovery that Lawyer Bridgewell had made about Lady Florence. Mathew was certainly taking a wrong step there—telling a man that he was on his way to hunt down a woman he loved. It was evident that Mathew had never had a grand passion or he would have understood human nature better. If Walgrave still loved Miss Hogg after all the insults she had heaped upon him,

was he likely to rejoice at her downfall, punishment, and disgrace?

He found Walgrave sitting in his garden reading the paper; a large, black Newfoundland dog lay at his feet. Walgrave looked sad but resigned; not so careworn as when we saw him last. He was pleased to see Mathew, but when he heard what had brought him there he turned pale for a moment and then listened with avidity to all that Mathew knew, after telling which Mathew asked him if he would go with him, telling him that the voyage would do him good. Walgrave had taken it all so calmly that Mathew had ventured the proposition. "Of course I don't ask you to take any part in the business," he added, "though by this time you must be cured of your infatuation and only remember the wrong she has done you."

"My dear Mathew, I agree with you; I have been a fool; love is madness, and I have had these symptoms of it in the most dangerous form. I am at peace now, and have no wish to revive past events, so that I must decline going with you. At the same time, I thank you for your well-meant offer. Go, my friend, and do your duty; you are paid for it; but as for me, I wrong no one if I refuse to be a party to this affair; it would be painful to me to see you gather proof after proof to condemn the woman I once loved. No, my friend, I will not go with you. When do you leave?"

"To-night at twelve, by way of France."

"All right; you will dine with me; then we will say good-by for the present, for I promised to meet some friends to-night, not knowing that you were coming. You will not feel slighted, will you?"

"Certainly not, Mr. Walgrave; and I am pleased to see you looking better than you did the last time we met. Shall I write to let you know of my progress?"

"No, Mathew, no; I would rather not know."

Very soon dinner was announced and Walgrave looked bright and almost happy. There was a light in his eyes that proved that he had not lost all his energy. Mathew was agreeably surprised and said, "You would be all right if you saw more company; you live too much alone, my friend."

"Right again, my friend; that 's the reason that I 'm going out to-night."

"At what time do you leave here?"

"At eight, or thereabouts."

"Well, it 's past seven now, so I 'll be going; good-by. Won't you wish me success?"

"I shall wish you neither success nor failure, my friend; use your own cleverness in the matter. My wishes can do you but little good, but I wish you safely back with all my heart; good-by."

They parted at the gate with a friendly handshake; but no sooner had Mathew disappeared than Walgrave seemed to have grown ten years younger; with head thrown back and eyes flashing, he re-entered the cottage, and, going up to his room, he packed his portmanteau, and, calling his housekeeper, he said, "I have to go away quite unexpectedly; I may be gone a month or more. Take care of the dog and the birds. I 'll let you know when I 'm coming back."

"Where shall I say that you have gone, sir, should anyone inquire after you?" asked the housekeeper, curiously.

"No one will inquire about me, and you know it; keep your mouth shut, you old cat, for if I hear that you have been gossiping you lose your place here;" and he walked out of the house, taking leave of his dog at the gate, the poor dog crying piteously. "Poor Carlo, poor Carlo," said Walgrave, "I love you, but I love Mamie better. God grant that I may arrive in time to save her. O, Mamie, my love, it would be my death to see you publicly disgraced. Ah, Mathew, we are still working against each other; is it our destiny? Who shall win, you or I?"

He hurried to the railway station and got a ticket for Liverpool, and on arriving there early the next morning his first inquiries were for the steamer that left for New York or Boston, but he was told that one had left at midnight and that another would not leave for two days. O, the thought was maddening! Two days lost! What could not Mathew do in two days? Poor Walgrave lost his temper as he used to do, but to no purpose; he had to wait, and in looking over the hotel register he saw the name of Lord Montgomery; he had been in this very hotel, and quite recently, too, only the day previous. The

perspiration ran down his face; he felt faint. Why had he been there? His detective instinct told him it was to hunt down Miss Hogg. Mathew had gone to get proofs, and Lord Montgomery had gone to America to have her watched, and must have gone the night before by the steamer that had left at midnight. He must make sure. After drinking a glass of wine he inquired of the clerk and was told that Lord Montgomery had come the night previous just in time to catch the American steamer, and that he was surprised that he had written his name in the visitors' book, having stayed there only an hour; it was not customary; but perhaps he wanted to leave a record of his having been in this hotel in case of accident during the voyage.

Walgrave allowed the clerk to talk to his heart's content; he was deathly pale; his head was on fire. O, he had not expected this; he had hoped to reach New York before Mathew could gather proofs enough to necessitate the sending of a telegram, but he never expected to find Lord Montgomery between Miss Hogg and himself, and, of course, detectives at work employed by him. Poor Walgrave, had not his hair been gray already it would have become so while he was waiting for the next steamer.

At last the day came, and he found himself on board, steaming away on what seemed to him the slowest steamer that he had ever been in. He would get there too late—he knew it—he would only make matters worse; he would be supposed to be Miss Hogg's accomplice, and that would be another disgrace. O, why did he always appear in a false light, he who felt that he was honest and honorable? He was not going now to help her to hide her crime, but to beg of her to send back the child before any exposure took place. He would take it upon himself to make things right with Lady Montgomery. O, if he could only have arrived in time she could have been saved! How came Lord Montgomery to have heard of the discovery made by the lawyer? Had he already communicated with him? If so, Mathew did not know it or he would have mentioned it to him. He also thought of his former voyage when Miss Hogg was on board, and how he had hoped to gain her love, and when he thought he had secured it how happy he was! He had not the remotest hope of gaining

her love now; if he could only save her it was all he wanted. To see her happy would bring him happiness, and to see her hunted and disgraced would break his heart anew. His love was the love of an honest man; not a particle of selfishness in it. How Miss Hogg could have inspired such love in a man like Walgrave is beyond comprehension. Love is a mystery, and is not always given according to merit.

At the end of eight days the steamer arrived in America. Walgrave was one of the first to reach the pier. He called a cab and directed the driver to take him to the Hoggs' mansion in Fifth avenue. We will leave him on his way there, return to Miss Hogg and see what she has been doing during the four months that have elapsed since she received the news of the countess's death.

CHAPTER LVII.

After the reading of that letter Miss Hogg felt so anxious and depressed that she could not remain in the city under the eyes of her father and of her friends, who believed her to be ill, and she really was very ill; her mental suffering was great. Plan as she might she could not see her way out of this unfortunate affair without scandal and exposure; the whole world would resound with it; she would lose Tom, who was becoming dearer to her every day. She had no one to advise her, for Katy, with whom she would often discuss the subject, was now married and a sedate woman who loved her husband and child, and she agreed with Jerry's mother, so that she had everything to make her happy; the only shadow was the past deed, and she had often reproached herself for having helped her mistress to steal the child. And Jerry and his mother had been entrapped into the business by Miss Hogg, so that they all seemed to be quite as guilty as herself, if not more so, and they all lived in daily fear of discovery.

When the black letter had come to her mother-in-law it had sent a thrill of horror through Katy, and with a heart-rending cry she had fainted, and it was more than an hour before she showed signs of returning consciousness, and then she sobbed bitterly, and pressed her boy to her heart, saying, "O, they will part us when they know that I helped to kill her;" for she thought it was Lady Florence who had died, and the telegram she received later relieved her mind greatly; still, she lived in fear, knowing that sooner or later all would be discovered. When Mamie told her that Mrs. Jerry had gone to fetch Lady Florence and was going to bring her to the farm, she had a relapse, and it was feared that fever would set in. As for Jerry, he was at his wits' end, and never for a moment ceased to regret having had a hand in the business. No kindness of hers could bring them peace of mind, and a terrible punishment was sure to follow. And to have Lady Florence at

the farm! Why, it was madness! What would the Russells say? They would never help Miss Hogg to hide the child; he said so in one of their conferences, and she had exclaimed, "O, my heart, but you 're a goose! Do you think that I 'm going to tell anyone who she is? We call her Isabelle. Well, my mother told her people that she had adopted a fair little girl, and very naturally they will think she is the one."

"But suppose Mrs. Hogg should come here and see the child—we would all be lost," said Katy.

"O, my mother is n't coming here for a while; father won't let her."

"And when the true Isabelle comes back, what then?" said Jerry.

"O, it won't be for a good while yet, for I told ma that as she was learning so well it would be a pity to take her away."

"O, Mamie, if you would only listen to reason and tell Mr. Tom everything he would make it right, for he loves you," said Katy with tears in her eyes. "And think of the shame and ruin that you will bring upon us all. My boy here will one day be ashamed of his mother. What I thought fun some years ago does n't seem like fun to me now. We would all be happy but for this miserable secret, and it is poisoning your own life, too, Mamie; you are not the same bright, happy girl that you were, and you know it."

"Yes, I know it, but I don't see any way out of it. If I tell Tom he will despise me and I shall lose him; he would never believe in me again. I can't, O, I can't tell him! not now, at least. Let us wait and hear what Jerry's mother will say when she comes back."

Mrs. Jerry did come back safely without having experienced any obstacles, for she was known to the late countess's servants; and after having settled matters with the governess and housekeeper she left with the young lady, and arrived safely in New York. Mrs. Jerry, as we may again call her, hurried to a quiet hotel uptown, directing her luggage to the farm, and ordered refreshments served in a private room, where they remained until a train left for the west. Not knowing Miss Hogg's plans, she had no wish to be seen with the child by anyone she knew, who

would naturally ask who she was. She was very anxious and full of fear, and Lady Florence asked her more than once of she was ill, for she loved her nurse Mary, as she had been taught to call her, and the answer had perplexed the child, as it had been, "Yes, miss. O, my head is spinning like a wheel; I don't know whether I 'm standing on my head or my heels. O, my dear young lady, I am in great trouble;" and tears ran down her cheeks.

Lady Florence had put her arms round her neck and said, "Don't cry, nurse; kiss me, and if you are not too ill let us go for a walk. I see a nice park down there; let us go in as we have to wait so long for the train." Mrs. Jerry had kissed her affectionately, and thought, "How could I have helped to wrong that darling?" but she only said, "We would not have time to go to Central Park; we might miss our train; but I hope to take you there some day and show you the wild animals; there are a good many of them, and birds too." And the child had said no more, but, seated by the window, looked at the people as they passed to and from the park, the nurses with their white caps and aprons, and good-sized little girls with white caps looking very much like an English nightcap, and cloaks reaching to their feet.

When it was time for them to leave the hotel Mrs. Jerry covered Lady Florence's face with a thick veil, and also wore one herself. Then they left the hotel and were soon at the Grand Central Depot at Forty-second street. They reached the farm in due time, taking care to arrive after dark so as not to meet anyone who might ask embarrassing questions. Miss Hogg was there and kissed and hugged the child, for she had learned to love her dearly, and she murmured, "O, and to think that she will learn to hate me one day! and through my own fault it is this beautiful child who stands between me and happiness."

Lady Florence saw that there was something very strange in Miss Hogg's actions, for she was very intelligent, and had traveled a great deal with the countess, and she remembered something of her past life, though she never spoke of it. Still, the time would come when she would require an explanation. She was nearly thirteen years old—very tall for her age—taller than Katy or Mrs. Jerry. A nice room had been prepared for her, to which Miss Hogg con-

ducted her; they had a long talk together and when they parted they were both in tears; Miss Hogg's last words to her were, "You must not tell anyone, dear; it would be my death."

"I won't, Mamie, trust me; but we must talk the matter over when you come back."

"Yes, dear; how I wish you were a little older, then you would understand me better."

"I am old for my age, Mamie, and I have known all along that I am not in my right place. I am glad that you have relieved my mind on some points. Good-by, Mamie, and don't cry; I 'll never say a word to hurt you."

Miss Hogg, after more kisses and more tears, which greatly relieved her, rejoined the Jerrys, who were surprised to see her eyes red with crying. She said, "Now, Katy, I am going home, and I will send the best piano I can find for Isabelle, and I will also send a governess; and you must let the Russells think that she is our Isabelle. I dare not stay, for I am afraid that they would read in my face that I am deceiving them. I will come back when they have seen her."

The next day she went back to New York, leaving the Jerrys to work more deceit on the Russells, and sinking deeper and deeper into sin.

The same day that Mamie had returned to New York, at about nine o'clock in the morning, Tom was on his way to his office, and as he passed Mamie's house he saw a beautiful, fair-haired young lady in the front garden; he opened the gate and walked in, smilingly, thinking, "This is the little girl that my Aunt Sophy adopted some years ago; I must speak to her." Her back was turned to him, yet he could see how graceful and elegant was her every motion; her beautiful golden curls reaching to her waist. Hearing his footsteps she turned and faced him; he stood still for a moment; then, raising his hat, he bowed to her as if she had been a grown-up young lady. He had never seen such a beauty. What splendid blue eyes! What a complexion of lilies and roses! What aristocratic features! "Why," thought Tom, "she might be a princess, for none could be more beautiful and elegant than she is. No wonder my aunt loves her. And to think that anyone could

have abandoned such a child! She has good blood in her veins, anyone can see that."

She advanced towards him, saying, "You are Mr. Tom Russell, I believe. You look surprised at seeing me here; did n't Mamie tell you that I was coming?"

"No, she did not. I suppose you are her sister Isabelle."

"I am called Isabelle," she replied with a slight blush.

"I thought so," said Tom. "I suppose Mamie wanted to give me a surprise; she has been successful. Where is she—in the house?"

"No, she left for New York this morning before I was up, for I came last night."

"What! Mamie gone without a word to me—not a good-by?"

"She will not be gone long, Mr. Russell; she has gone to buy a piano and get a governess for me so that I can go on with my studies." Tom was more and more amazed as he heard her speak, for this was not the talk of a dependent, but more of a grand lady accustomed to have her own way as a right, not as a favor; and it came so natural to her, and she said it in such a sweet, pleasant voice. Tom wished her good morning, and said he would call for her, on his way back from his office, to take her to see his mother and sisters; they would all be pleased to see her; he would call at five. He asked her if Aunt Sophy had come too.

"No one has come with me, Mr. Russell." And Tom saw for the second time the rosy tint come into her cheeks, which puzzled him not a little, for what had he said to make her blush? He went away with his thoughts full of Isabelle and her strange ways; for he did think her ways were strange for a child who had been taken by his aunt from a home, and yet her grand air was becoming to her; there was no arrogance, no false pride; her manners were perfectly natural; she seemed born to them, to feel that she was a lady, and Tom had to admit that he felt it too. Without being able to account for it, he had spoken to her as if she were his superior, not a child living on the bounty of his aunt. He wished more than once that closing time had come so that he might take her to his people; he wanted to see what impression she would make on them.

But why had not his aunt come with her? She was

so fond of her, how could she part with her so soon after her arrival? She must have arrived lately, for they had not heard Mamie mention her; and that reminded him that the girl had said, "Yes, I am called Isabelle," as if it was not really her name. "Aunt Sophy did n't tell us what her other name was, and I don't think anyone asked, for we felt very little interest in the child except for my aunt's sake. I must find out to-night."

On his way home Tom called at the farm, and was pleased to see that Isabelle was ready to accompany him. Katy came into the room, and told him to take good care of her and to bring her back himself, not to send her by any of the servants; and this he promised, wondering at the great respect shown by Katy to his aunt's *protégée*. "Her governess will be here soon," Katy continued, "to accompany her wherever she goes, but until then I am responsible for her, you understand, Mr. Tom." Katy had a serious, uneasy look that Tom could not understand, but he promised that he and his sisters would bring her back. And so Lady Florence went to make the acquaintance of the Russells.

John had just returned from school, having been kept in that afternoon, and as he turned to close the door he saw Tom coming down the avenue with a young lady by his side, and he called out to Mary at the top of his voice, "Mary, come here and look; Tom is bringing another sweetheart. I wonder if he 'll kiss her hand too. O what a fool I was not to see how matters stood between them; I won't be so blind this time. But this is quite a young lady in short skirts. Why don't you come and see?" and he rushed into the kitchen swinging his books over his head by the strap, and very nearly knocking down the tray of newly-made bread that his mother was carrying out of the kitchen.

"What is the matter with you, John? No wonder you 're kept in school if you behave there as you do at home. What do you want with Mary? She 's not here; she 's in the garden with Julia."

"I only wanted to tell her that Tom is coming down the avenue with a young lady."

"O, is he, and do you know the lady?"

"No, I don't; but you 'd better hide that bread in case they come right in here."

"I 'll do nothing of the kind, my boy," said Mrs. Russell, laughingly; "I 'm not at all ashamed of my bread; on the contrary, I 'm proud of it; it looks appetizing;" and she placed it on the pantry shelf.

John ran away to make himself presentable before going into the dining room, where he knew they had gone, for he could hear the old people and his sisters talking.

Tom, after introducing Isabelle to his grandparents and his sisters, had left them and gone in search of his mother to tell her the news and what a lovely girl Isabelle was.

"Why," said his mother, "you are not going to fall in love with her as you did with Mamie at first sight, are you?"

"No, mother; Isabelle is too grand for me; she looks like a princess."

"O, come now, Tom, that 's too strong when you know where your aunt got her from; I only hope she will not repent of it, for it is so seldom that these children turn out right, especially when they 're good looking."

"O, come, mother, you won't think so when you see her; she 's simply perfect; I have never seen her equal anywhere." And Mrs. Russell, taking off her apron and dusting the flour from her sleeves, went with Tom to the dining room, and was struck dumb with surprise at the vision of loveliness that met her eyes; it was not only her beauty that astonished her, but her grand air. She was talking to the old people as if she had known them all her life; there was neither shyness nor boldness, but perfect ease; had she just left boarding school she could never have had that calm composure which made her behavior so perfect; but having lived with the countess, who was a grand old lady, she had learned her ways and ease of manner, which had come easy and natural to her, having been born in that sphere of life, and with her mixed blood of French and English, for it will be remembered that her father was the Count De La Rochefoucauld, a member of the French aristocracy, and her mother the sister of Lady Montgomery, a real blue blood of England; so it is no wonder that with her birth, training, and beauty combined she made the impression she did on the Russells, who be-

lieved her to be the adopted child of Mrs. Hogg. They had been told that she was fair and pretty, but they had not been told to expect such a grand creature as now appeared before them. Each of the Russells in turn was impressed with the same feeling of respect towards her, yet her ways were free from pride and superiority towards them; she showed great respect to the old people and talked freely to the young ones. John was very shy with her; he, who always had so much to say, blushed and stammered when she addressed him, which she did repeatedly to make him feel at ease.

Mrs. Russell, when introduced to her, had kissed her forehead and said, "Welcome to Russell farm, my dear," and she had answered, "Thank you, madam, for your kind welcome; I like your farm; it reminds me of one I knew long ago;" and again the color mounted to her face. Tom noticed it and it puzzled him.

Mary and Julia had helped to take off her lovely broad-brimmed, gray felt hat, with a long white feather, and lined with rose-colored satin—and her pretty gray jacket; her dress was also gray, trimmed with satin the same as the hat, and she wore a broad sash ribbon around her slender waist, tied in a large bow at the back, the ends reaching to the hem of her pretty dress; her hair was tied back with a rose-colored ribbon, making a pretty bow on the top of her lovely head, and giving a delicate tint to her cheeks. A diamond pin was at her throat, which was encircled with fine white lace, as were also her wrists. Her hands were white and small, and her pretty gray silk boots and stockings, which could be seen, as she was still in short skirts, disclosed a tiny foot and beautifully shaped ankle. No wonder that she made an impression on all the Russells, and that they all agreed that they had never before seen such a beauty.

Mary and Julia took her in to tea and seated her between them, with Tom opposite, who played the gallant to perfection. John would have liked to do the same but he felt shy, as nearly all boys of his age do. Mr. Russell often spoke to her, and she answered him with a composure that surprised him. He said once, "What 's your name, my child?" and she had answered, "I am called Isabelle Reynolds," and the same rosy tint had suffused her face

once more. "A very pretty name, my dear," he had replied, wishing to put her at her ease; for having seen the blush, he thought, "Poor child, she must feel her position," and could account for the blush, but he could not account for the toss of the head that had come after the blush.

She had promised Miss Hogg not to tell the Russells for the present who she was, as it would ruin her happiness, for she was to marry Tom, but to allow them all to call her Isabelle Reynolds for a short time. Miss Hogg had explained a great many things to her the night of her arrival at the farm, which had refreshed Lady Florence's memory in regard to many occurrences in her past life. She had always remembered her dying mother and the tall dark lady who had come to fetch her and had taken her to a country where only English was spoken, not French, to which she had been used. The dark lady had said that she was her aunt, and she had been very happy with her, and a dark young gentleman whom she called her cousin. All these things she remembered; but how Miss Hogg had come into her life, and why she had taken her away, were mysteries to her, for she no longer believed that gypsies would steal her. Miss Hogg had been very kind to her and seemed to love her dearly, and she returned that love. She had been told that the Countess de Pascalina was related to her, but she had always doubted it, and when Mrs. Martin, her nurse, had come to fetch her after the countess's death, and had found her dressed in deep mourning, she had made her take it off as soon as they had arrived at a hotel. In fact, she often felt puzzled, and since the half confession that Miss Hogg had made to her she felt still more mystified. Miss Hogg would have to explain; she felt that an explanation was due to her, and Miss Hogg had promised her one, but had asked her to wait a short time longer or it would break her heart, and she had sobbed as if it were already broken, and that made Lady Florence cry, and promise willingly not to tell the Russells her real name; but her noble nature rebelled against the part she was playing; she could not say, "My name is Isabelle Reynolds," but "I am called Isabelle Reynolds," which set Tom thinking, for he saw her proud head go up, and he could see that it was not shame that had made her blush; but what was it?

Mrs. Russell soon asked her, "How did you leave your mother, my dear; was she well, and why did she not come with you?"

"My mother died when I was quite young, madam."

"I know, child; I mean Mrs. Hogg, Mamie's mother; for of course you call her mother;" and her answer sounded strange as she replied:

"I have been traveling with the countess lately, and though Mamie has often come to see me, I have not been introduced to any member of her family until now."

The Russells looked at each other, not knowing what to make of it. Could two or three years at a boarding school have made her forget Mrs. Hogg? No; they all felt that there was a mystery, but they were too honorable to question the child, though her answer had thrown a cloud over them all.

CHAPTER LVIII.

After tea they all returned to the drawing-room, leaving the servant to clear the table alone that night. Julia asked Isabelle if she played the piano. Her eyes opened wide at the question and she answered, "I have taken lessons of the best masters;" and she walked to the piano, Tom following her, and opening it for her. She played piece after piece, sad and gay, such as they had never heard before, and, selecting an Italian song, she sang it with as pure an accent as a prima donna; it was wonderful for one so young. Then she sang a German song from memory, then a French one, and they were all astonished.

"How purely you pronounce French," said the old lady.

"It is my native tongue, madam; my father was French; I was born in France."

"Why, I thought"—began the old lady, then stopped short.

Lady Florence saw that she had done wrong to speak of her father, when she saw the look of astonishment written on every face. Miss Hogg had asked her not to mention her name to them, but she had not told her that she would be impersonating a foundling—and she had kept her promise; she had not told her real name. She did not know that Miss Hogg had an adopted sister; she knew nothing of Mrs. Hogg; had never seen her; all the people she knew were the Jerrys and Katy, besides Miss Hogg; still, she felt that she was in a false position, so she replied, "You seem surprised; perhaps Mamie has not told you, but she will some day, and in the meantime we won't speak about myself any more;" and, turning to Mary, she said, "You play, don't you?"

"Not like you, my dear;" and, going to the piano, Mary played and sang a sweet song, Tom and Julia taking part in it. They were still at it when the servant came to the door, and, when the song was ended, said that young Mrs. Jerry had come for the young lady; so

Mary and Julia helped Lady Florence with her things, and wishing all good night, she went away with Katy, Tom seeing them home. As he was leaving he noticed that Katy looked unhappy and he told her so. Her answer had taken him by surprise; they were alone, the child having gone into the house. "Yes, Mr. Tom, I am an unhappy woman, and I must say a word to you; I must, whatever Mamie says to the contrary; she won't speak so I must. For the love of God, for the love you bear Miss Hogg, if you don't want something terrible to happen, don't allow anyone to question Isabelle."

"What is to be gained by questioning her, Katy? We all know where she comes from, and we would not pain her by any questions as to her past life."

"O, Mr. Tom, you don't understand, and I can't explain. God help me, I sometimes think I'm going mad!"

"Don't excite yourself," said Tom, kindly; "no harm will come to Mamie through me or mine, and we won't question the child. Why should we care who her parents were? So don't fret. Mary is coming for her to-morrow to spend the day with us, and if any visitors should call we will only introduce her as a young friend of cousin Mamie's. Will that satisfy you?"

"Yes, Mr. Tom, it must; good night."

She ran in and Tom went home more puzzled than ever. He told his people not to say to anyone that Isabelle was an adopted child, as his aunt and cousin would n't care to have it known.

Mary went the next day to fetch Isabelle to dine with them, and she was surprised and pleased to find that Mamie had returned accompanied by a middle aged lady who was to be governess to the young lady.

"Well," said Mary, "I have come to fetch Isabelle and I'm not going back without her; the child must have a holiday, so let her governess rest a day or two, and you also come with me. Tom will be pleased to find you there when he comes back from the office. Why did not Aunt Sophy come? is she coming soon?"

"Well, Mary, ma is not very well, and you know that pa does n't like her to leave him alone."

No more was said and she accompanied Mary to the

Russells' and after school John showed Lady Florence all over the farm; he was losing his shyness, and the two children had a pleasant time. John got a pair of Mary's shoes to put over Isabelle's tiny boots, going about the stables. She seemed familiar with all kinds of animals; said she could ride, and that many years ago she had a white pony. John looked hard at her but said nothing, as his brother Tom had said to him, "No matter what the young lady says, don't question her." He told her that Mary or Julia would let her have whichever horse she would like to ride; and when Tom came home he found John helping Isabelle to take off her shoes. John blushed when he saw Tom looking at him, but he said, "You hurry in; Mamie's there;" and it was Tom's turn to blush. He forgot all about Isabelle when he saw Mamie, for she was his all.

Miss Hogg felt much relieved by her cousin's greeting; it must be that nothing had gone wrong the day before, and she again postponed the day of explanation. The Russells did not question her about the child; had she volunteered an explanation it would have pleased them, but she did not, and always looked embarrassed when a chance word was said about her; they contented themselves with admiring her and enjoying her presence. She came often to see the Russells. Mamie almost lived at the farm, only going to New York now and then for a day or two, and sometimes for weeks she would remain at the farm except to go for long rides in the country, accompanied by Isabelle and some of the Russells.

Months had passed since Lady Florence had arrived at the farm, and yet nothing had been explained either to her or the Russells. Tom was very urgent about his marriage. He had gone to New York, and with the help of his aunt had made everything right with Mr. Hogg, who said that he saw so little of his "gal" that she might as well be married; that she was always at the farm and seemed to have forgotten her dad altogether; so that he, Tom, had better make her name the day, and that they should have a grand wedding that would make everybody talk and envy them. Tom was for a quiet wedding, but Mr. Hogg would not hear of it, and had exclaimed, "What do you think I have money for, eh? My gal shall have a wedding

that she will remember all her life, though I never thought of giving her to a Russell; but as she said to me some time ago, 'Why should you find fault with me, did n't you marry a Russell yourself, pa?' and laughed in my face, 'and why should n't I, too, marry a Russell?' I laughed at her cuteness as I answered her, 'Well, my gal, if your Russell turns out as well as my Russell did, I won't complain.' "

"You may rest assured, Mr. Hogg, that I will do all in my power to make Mamie happy; we have known each other nearly two years, and I don't see the need of waiting any longer."

"Nor do we, my boy; you tell her that her mother and I wish to see her married as soon as possible. She must come back here and prepare all her folderols; never mind the expense."

Tom went back west and discussed the matter with his cousin, who put him off for a little while longer, and no coaxing of his could change her decision; it would only bring tears to her eyes, as she replied, "Tom, dear Tom, wait a month longer;" and poor Tom had moments of doubt and sadness.

After Tom's departure Mr. Hogg said to his wife, "You had better begin getting things for Mamie and for that young one you adopted—much good she is to you, so far away; just as if we had no schools here good enough for anyone. And now that we are going to lose Mamie why not have her back? She 's a bright child, and I 've missed her myself, especially since Mamie has her farm, for she 's never here; but I 'm no fool; it 's not the farm that keeps her there, but Tom; and if she 's so mad after him, why don't she marry him? Then she 'll have enough of him, perhaps too much, in time."

"My dear James, how you do talk! I 'm quite sure that Mamie will never have cause to repent having married Tom Russell."

"Well, perhaps not; I hope she 's not going to play us a trick as she did with that detective—what 's his name? O, yes, Walgrave. What did she do that for? I see no sense in it; it only made people talk, and the less a woman is talked about the better it is for her—that kind of talk, at least."

"Well, to tell you the truth, James, I don't quite

understand Mamie; she certainly loves Tom, and yet she puts him off as if she did n't care for him. But I 'll take your advice concerning Isabelle. I feel lonely, and I wish her to be here for the wedding; surely it won't be long now before it takes place; and I tell you what—I 'm not going to tell Mamie what we are going to do about it, for she has always talked me out of it when I spoke of getting Isabelle back."

"That 's right, wife; it will be a surprise to her; the child must be bridesmaid, and mind you get her togs fit for a queen, for I want the whole thing to be peachy and to shut the mouths of some of my acquaintances. Why, no later than last week there was that barefooted blackguard who said to me before a lot of brokers, 'Hello, old Hogg, how do you do? You seem to have got fat on the old peddler's pack'—meaning my father, who began life as a peddler, as I have told you before—and they all laughed in my face as I said, 'Get out, you blackguard, or I 'll kick you into the middle of next week.' 'What for?' said Murphy, 'for telling you the truth? Well, I 'm blest! I 'm not ashamed of my father, why should you be of yours? Mine was a gentleman, and never left me a cent, and yours was a peddler and left you a fortune.' I often have those things thrown into my face. One of the brokers said, 'Did you hear about such a bank, have you any money in it? They say it 's going to fail; the manager has decamped.' 'What 's that to do with me? I was in a bank once, but I never decamped, and it 's all fair and square with me.' The devil take them! They 're all jealous because I 'm better off than they are, that 's all; still, it 's not pleasant to meet people who know so much about one's ancestors;" and he slapped his knees angrily with his open hand.

His wife had slipped out of the room when she heard him speak about business, and had gone to write her letter to the mother superior of the convent of the Sacred Heart in Paris, to have Isabelle sent back under the care of a trusty governess, who, if approved of by Mrs. Hogg, would be kept as a teacher to the young lady. She posted the letter herself so that it would not be in the power of the servants to tell Mamie what she had done.

Isabelle would be with her in less than three weeks.

In the meantime she began preparations for Mamie's marriage, refurnishing her house in Brooklyn, where it had been agreed that Tom and Mamie were to live after their marriage, Tom to begin business as a lawyer in Wall street, New York.

When Mamie had been urged by her mother to come to New York to look after her trousseau she had answered, "I will come, but not just yet; I will write you when to expect me;" and her mother had heard nothing more of her. So Isabelle came back, a lovely girl, tall for her age, and threw herself into Mrs. Hogg's arms, saying, "I 'm so pleased that you have sent for me! I feared that you had ceased to love me."

"No, my dear, and only for Mamie I would never have sent you away, but she said that it would be for your good, and perhaps she was right; you have improved, my dear;" and she kissed her again.

"And where is Mamie, mamma? Is n't she here?"

"No, dear, she is in the country, and when we are rested we will go and see her and give her a surprise."

CHAPTER LIX.

In the meantime Miss Hogg was feeling more tranquil. More than four months had elapsed since she had sent the lawyer on the wrong tack. He had had plenty of time to get the letter back from Australia, and yet he had taken no step to discover the cause; that proved to Miss Hogg that he felt no interest in the matter; her name had not appeared in it; the parties who had written to him were all strangers to him, and she had not heard from them again; they must have settled the business among themselves, and he had allowed the matter to drop. She would never hear anything more from him; that was as clear as day; and Lady Florence could remain on the farm for years and no one be the wiser for it as long as she kept the real Isabelle away, and that she must do at any cost. She would induce her mother to go to Paris next year with some of their friends and remain there for some time. She could have Isabelle with her during the holidays, and take her about, but she must leave her at the convent to finish her education. She knew how to get around her mother, and Tom was pressing her so that she could no longer put him off. So, having set her mind at rest in regard to the lawyer, she made up her mind to marry Tom at all hazards. She had tried so often to tell him, but somehow the words would not come; the great fear of losing him was forever before her eyes, so she would marry him and run the risk of whatever would happen in the future, for she intended that Lady Florence should have her rights some day, for she knew that she was a great heiress and she did not intend to make her lose her inheritance. But surely it would be easier to tell Tom when they had been married for years, and she saw no other way open to her. Had the lawyer interfered in the matter she would have been compelled to take another course; but, thank heaven! he had allowed the matter to drop, and she was becoming bright and happy again, full of fun and mischief, and she was the light of the Russells' home.

Lady Florence often accompanied her there and she had become very much attached to the Russells. She would sit for hours with the old people, talk with them, and read and play for them; she had a sweet, pleasant temper, and could laugh merrily at Miss Hogg's nonsense, but never took part in it.

One evening she was playing and singing to the old people; her sweet voice could be heard through the house; Miss Hogg and Tom were walking arm in arm on the veranda, their faces beaming with true love and happiness. Tom had gained his wish, for Mamie had just promised him to go to New York the next day to prepare for their wedding, which they had agreed should take place in five weeks. Having planned and arranged matters to the satisfaction of both, they were on the point of re-entering the house when they saw in the semi-darkness the form of a tall man hurrying toward the house. They waited to see who it could be, and were surprised at seeing Jerry, for Jerry it was. He approached the door with the intention of knocking, and the hall light shone on his face, which was as pale as death. Miss Hogg hurried towards him, not giving him time to knock, and asked in a choked voice, "What is it, Jerry? what has happened?"

Jerry only saw Miss Hogg, for Tom had remained in the shadow of the climbing roses, not wishing to appear anxious to know Jerry's business with his mistress; but his blood ran cold as he heard him answer, "O, Miss Hogg, we 're all lost; come to the house at once." Then seeing Tom, who had approached and had heard his dreadful words, he stopped short, and said, "I mean—I mean there is a lady at the house who wishes to see you."

Miss Hogg's face had turned white as death. The change of feeling had been so great—from perfect happiness to the depth of despair—that for a moment her tall figure swayed as if about to fall to the ground. Tom hastened to put his arm around her to sustain her, but the weakness had already passed away, and she turned on Jerry and said, "What do you mean by frightening me in that manner? I felt sure that the house was on fire, and it is only a friend who has come to see me; tell her that I 'm coming;" and she ran in to get her hat and jacket.

Tom saw that she was white to the lips as she passed

under the light in the hallway. What could have happened and why had Jerry said, "We are all lost," placing himself and others, whoever they may be, on the same footing with his mistress. And why had Mamie turned so white? But here she was, coming out again. Going up to her, he said, "Shall I go with you, Mamie? You don't seem fit to go alone."

She stood still and looked at him with despairing love and anguish in her black eyes; then, throwing her arms around his neck, and burying her face on his shoulder, she said, "Tom, dear Tom, whatever happens never doubt that I love you and don't despise me." And, kissing him passionately, she disengaged herself from his embrace and left him, saying, "Don't come with me; it would do no good. O, why did I not tell you? Good-by, my love." And she was gone.

He saw her rejoin Jerry, who must have been waiting for her. He had not gone to the house and delivered her message, and that he knew he was not expected to do so was clear to Tom; but what could Mamie be hiding from him. Whatever it was, she must have believed the danger past for had she not that very night promised to marry him in five weeks? And she had looked radiantly happy. And now she seemed to have lost all hope of becoming his wife and had acted as if they were parting forever; and he was to believe that she loved him, whatever happened. But what was going to happen? O, if he only knew, he might save her and advise her! She loved him, he had no doubt of that; so, if she would only tell him, everything would come right; but what could it be? and his heart ached, for he saw that whatever it was he would lose Mamie. Had she not said so? Had she not taken her farewell of him? He felt that that was what she meant when she kissed him so passionately. O, there was love in that kiss, and despair too! But some one was speaking to him —who was it?

"Is that you, Katy, and what do you want? Speak; has anything happened to Mamie?"

"No, Mr. Tom, no; I want to speak to you;" and her voice seemed to tremble with fear and anguish.

"Well, tell me what you want, Katy."

"O, Mr. Tom, I hardly know how to express myself;

how I wish that Miss Hogg had told you, as I advised her to do! You would have made it all right, for you love her."

"Tell me yourself, Katy, and let me save her from whatever it may be."

"O, Mr. Tom, I can't; I have promised her that I would never tell; but, Mr. Tom, for the love of God, for the love you bear Mamie, for the honor of the family, don't tell that Miss Isabelle has been here all these months, and whatever happens to-morrow don't look surprised; act as if you had never seen Miss Isabelle; do promise, Mr. Tom, and that you will tell your people to do the same;" and Katy actually joined her hands and was about to fall on her knees when Tom said sternly, "What are you about, Katy, are you mad? Do you wish me to have the whole household here? Whatever I can do for my cousin shall be done without your being compelled to kneel to me; but this I must tell you, that even for the sake of Mamie, whom I love more than my own life, I will not be an accomplice in anything dishonorable, nor will any of the Russells. Death before dishonor is our motto. Now that you know me, what do you wish me to do?"

"Nothing, Mr. Tom; I only ask that whatever you may hear or see you will all keep silent about Miss Isabelle's having been here at Miss Hogg's farm; will you do it? Don't say no, Mr. Tom," she continued, as she saw that Tom hesitated, "or you will be the cause of Mamie's ruin, and perhaps of her death; promise, O, promise, that I may go and relieve her mind; if you could see her white face your heart would ache."

"I have seen it, and my heart does ache. Why not let me save her, for I feel sure that I could if you would only confide in me."

"O, Mr. Tom, I wish I could, but I swore to Mamie that I would never tell and I can't break my oath;" and the tears ran down her cheeks. "Make haste, Mr. Tom, and promise me; I ought to be with Miss Hogg now; I only ask you to remain silent; nothing more."

"Well, Katy, I promise, though I feel that in doing so I am doing wrong."

"No, no, Mr. Tom; you have saved Miss Hogg for the present, at least. Good night, and God bless you!"

And Tom found himself alone, for Katy had rushed home as soon as she had received his promise to be silent. He could hear Lady Florence singing, so she was still there. Was she to remain with them? Neither Mamie nor Katy had said so. Were they expected to hide her, and why, and how could they remain silent about her coming to them when she was there herself?

He went into the house to tell his mother what had happened, but when she had heard all he had to say she said that she was at a loss to understand the motives of Mamie or Katy. All that she could make out was that something was going to happen and that some one was coming for Isabelle. "It must be some of her people who wish to claim her, and Mamie must have known of it for some time past, and as she loves her dearly she has no wish to give her up; that is my opinion."

"Well, mother, you may be right, and I begin to think you are; but why did n't Mamie trust us and tell us all about it?"

"Well, my son, perhaps she thought that we would not approve of her keeping the child from her parents. However, time will tell, and don't you fret about Mamie; she will never give you up, for she loves you madly; don't you know that we can see it?"

Tom was much relieved by his mother's view of the affair.

Soon afterwards Mrs. Jerry came in and asked for the young lady; the old woman looked pale, but calm, and when asked by Mrs. Russell how Mamie was she answered, "O, she 's all right; that fool of a son of mine gave her a start when he told her that her mother had come. She feared that something had happened to her father."

"O, it was Sophy, was it? Well, really, what a fuss about nothing! Jerry ought to have known better than to have made such a mystery of her coming."

Mrs. Jerry said no more, but departed with the supposed Isabelle. As soon as she had left Tom said, "I can't understand this business at all. Aunt Sophy may have come, but that would not have made Jerry so pale, and he did n't mention to Mamie that her mother had come, I am sure of that; and how could her mother's coming make her act towards me as she did? And then Katy coming at

me and making me promise to be silent about Isabelle. However, we must try to keep the promise I made, and wait."

That night they held a conference, and agreed to keep silent as far as the family was concerned, but that the servants would talk they knew; still, they thought it best to say nothing to them about holding their tongues. Old Mr. Russell said he did n't approve of masters or mistresses putting themselves in the power of the servants; and that whether they promised to keep silent or not they would talk, and be on the lookout to see who was coming to ask for the child; and that if they were not told, there was a chance that whoever was coming would not be seen by them; and that for some time to come, in fact, until this mystery was solved, it would be well that some member of the family attend the door. Having agreed that this was a wise plan to adopt, they retired, more to think what the morrow might bring forth than with hope of sleep. Mrs. Russell, the elder, had remarked during the discussion, "If Sophy is here we shall soon know the truth, for she can never deceive." So the next day was looked forward to with great anxiety and expectation that the mystery would be cleared up by Mrs. Hogg; but Mrs. Hogg only made it more inexplicable.

When Miss Hogg rejoined Jerry she had whispered, "Who is it, Jerry? Is it Lady Montgomery? Does she know that her niece is here?"

"No, miss, it is not Lady Montgomery, but Mrs. Hogg with the real Miss Isabelle."

"What!" almost screamed Miss Hogg, "Isabelle here, when I believed her in Paris? Has my mother discovered everything?"

"I think not; but she gave us such a fright; Katy nearly fainted at the sight of her, and instead of helping Mrs. Hogg into the house she ran back and called to me to run and tell you that your mother was here with Miss Isabelle, and I have come, as you see; but try to calm yourself, miss, or your mother will think it strange that her coming has upset everybody."

"You 're right, Jerry, I must be brave. Lady Florence must be taken away this very night. Have the carriage ready at some distance from the house so that my mother

won't see it, and let your mother pack up a few things; take the trunk to the carriage yourself and then let your mother go for Lady Florence and take her to our house in Brooklyn, and let her pass there as a relative of the Russells come to see New York, you understand. I must go to my mother, and I won't leave her nor the child until you let me know that the other one is gone. Where is Katy?"

"I don't know; in the house, I suppose."

Miss Hogg went through the house before going to her mother, but Katy was not to be seen, so that she had to face her mother without any prearranged plans between herself and Katy.

Katy had gone to Tom, as we have seen, to prepare and smooth the way for Mamie and to put off the evil day as long as possible, to give Mamie time to think; she was as cunning as her mistress, if not more so; and she knew that if the Russells told Mrs. Hogg that her supposed adopted daughter had been there, and they saw the real one with her, an explanation would have to follow, and after what had happened in London Mrs. Hogg would soon discover that Mamie had been justly accused of abducting Lady Montgomery's niece; and by making Tom promise that nothing would be said about the young lady she had secured a few days' respite for her mistress. Katy saw no way of escape, for they were getting cornered; it was sure to become known that the false Isabelle had been at the Russells', and they were not the people to help on such a disgraceful plot. That Mamie would lose Tom now she felt sure; but if things had been explained to him before the discovery there would have been a chance for forgiveness, for Tom loved her; he would have managed to send Lady Florence back to her people in a quiet way, and there would have been no scandal,—even his own people need not have known it; but now all that opportunity was gone, and there would be a great scandal when it became known that for years Miss Hogg had concealed the whereabouts of Lady Florence because Lord Montgomery had refused her matrimonial advances. How could Tom Russell marry her after such an exposure? His people would all turn against him were he to do so, and in spite of all her professions of love for him she had loved Lord Mont-

gomery. He would turn away from her with disgust if it broke his heart to do so, for he was an honorable man. Katy knew enough of the Russells to guess what would happen, so she had gone to Tom to gain time, but not until she had seen Miss Hogg enter the house with Jerry and had noticed how pale and ill she looked. She had waited until her return, fearing to meet her and be prevented from carrying out her plan of seeing Tom; and it was well for Mamie that Katy had waited, as the story will show.

Miss Hogg, being unable to find Katy, went to her own room, bathed her face, and drank a glass of water, for her throat was parched, her tongue dry, and her heart beating fast. The news that her mother was there with the real Isabelle had dashed her hopes of happiness to the ground; she would lose Tom. O, why had she not told him before? Coming from her it would not have shocked him so much as having heard it by chance; and to think that she was on the point of marrying him with the secret untold! How he would despise and hate her!

"O, Tom, my love, my love!" she cried in anguish, and in her grief she remembered what Walgrave had said on leaving her. "O, Mamie, my love, how could you!" and she had laughed in his face. O this was retribution indeed! Poor Walgrave must have suffered as she was suffering now. Would Tom laugh at her as she had laughed at Walgrave? No, for he loved her! but it would break his heart; she had ruined his life and her own. Such a beautiful prospect had opened to her—a life of blissful love with her cousin, and now she had lost him by deceiving him. Poor Mamie! Sinful as she was, she was to be pitied, for the anguish of her heart was great and can only be understood by those who have loved and lost. She loved Tom madly; she had given him her whole heart and soul, her every thought; she lived in him; he was all the world to her; he was her first love, and would be her last, come what might. Still, she knew that appearances were against her, and that she would not appear in her true light to her cousin Tom, who was so true and frank in all his actions. As these thoughts passed through her brain it was no wonder that she looked pale and ill and that her throat was parched. Having swallowed a glass of water, she went down to

her mother, whom she found with Isabelle in the drawing-room, looking rather offended at her neglect by Katy and the other servants. As her daughter entered she said, without noticing how ill she looked, "We thought of giving you a pleasant surprise by coming upon you unexpectedly, but we are received more like the dead arisen from their graves, for as soon as Katy saw us at the gate she ran screaming away and has not come back. Are we not welcome at your farm?"

Miss Hogg had had time to recover herself during her mother's long speech, and she said, "Indeed, ma, you are welcome, and so is dear Isabelle." And kissing them both, she continued: "Don't be hard on Katy; she knew that I was at the Russells' and she ran to call her husband and sent him to tell me that you had come. Of course she might have helped you in first, but I suppose she lost her head on seeing you, and in her hurry to send for me."

"Well, that may be," said Mrs. Hogg, "so we will say no more about it. We have n't come to stay, my dear, at least not more than a week. I have come to find out when you and Tom intend to get married; I must know the day. I won't be put off any longer. I have already begun to make preparations; I have had my house in Brooklyn beautifully furnished and it is in readiness for you."

Poor Mamie, her mother's kind words cut her like a knife. Her marriage with Tom! O, it would never take place! But she could not tell her that without telling her all, and that she could n't do; so she said, "You are too good to me, ma."

"No, my dear; and your father wishes you to have a grand wedding that will astonish the four hundred; he told me to tell you so, as he said, and it is true, that most of them began life as his father did, with a pack on their backs, and he 's not going to allow them to show off more than he will. Tom and I were for a more quiet wedding, but he would n't hear of it, and we must please him, my dear, for he has been very good to us."

"All right, ma, I 'll let you know before you leave here, and probably will go back with you."

"That 's right, my dear, and Isabelle is going to be one of your bridesmaids, and, of course, Mary and Julia, and some of your New York friends. Your father wants you

to have twelve bridesmaids. O, here comes Katy. Why did you run away when you saw us?"

"Surely there was no such hurry to let me know that ma had come; you might have helped her in before sending for me," Miss Hogg had hastened to say before Katy could reply to her mother.

"Yes, miss, I ought to have done so, but I forgot at the moment and only thought of letting you know. Tea is ready, miss, and I have been preparing the ladies' rooms."

Mrs. Hogg, rising, followed her with Isabelle.

Katy soon came down again and said, "Jerry and his mother are gone and I have sent the governess away, for it would never do to have her here."

"You are right, Katy, you have acted prudently; but she must be dismissed, for she will talk, and the servants in Brooklyn will soon find out that all is not right."

"She is going to be dismissed by Mrs. Jerry as soon as they arrive in New York, and she will not even know where they are going with the young lady."

"O, but, Katy, we are lost all the same. To-morrow my mother will visit her people with Isabelle; I can't prevent it; and they will tell her all."

"No, Mamie, you are safe in that quarter for a few days at least; I have seen Mr. Tom, and have made him promise to keep silent on the matter and not mention to anybody that Miss Isabelle has been at their house."

"Did you tell him that my mother was here?"

"No, of course not; I said as little as I could; all I wanted was the promise that he and his people would not mention Miss Isabelle to anyone, and he did promise after a while; he did n't care to do so at first, but when I told him that you were in danger he did promise for himself and his family. O, how he loves you, Mamie!"

"Don't, don't, Katy, I can't bear it! I have lost him. But here comes ma;" and Katy left them going to tea while she went to attend to her baby; she kissed him and cried over him, fearing to be parted from him when everything was known.

Mrs. Hogg asked about her people, declaring her intention of going to see them with Isabelle on the morrow,

at which Mamie turned pale; her mother noticed it and said, "You don't look very well, Mamie."

"I have a bad headache, ma."

Poor Mamie, it was a heartache that she had!

The next day Isabelle was up early, running about the house and garden. She felt free and happy; she had been so long in the convent where everything is done by rule, never being free to do as she wished, that she appreciated her freedom and was making the most of it. Katy had helped her to dress, not in her school uniform, but in a beautiful French toilette; and her hair was not done up in a tight plait behind her back, but hung in beautiful curls tied with a blue ribbon; she wore a white dress of the finest lace and embroidery, a wide blue sash around her waist and a pearl necklace around her neck; she looked almost as handsome as Lady Florence, but she was more timid, not having had the advantages that Lady Florence had had of mingling with the countess and her set; she had not the self-possession, the queenly air, nor the *savoir-faire* of Lady Florence. Katy had attended to her to prevent the chance of the other servants mentioning the other Isabelle to her.

It was almost nine o'clock; Mrs. and Miss Hogg were in the breakfast room, and as a strange servant brought in the breakfast Mrs. Hogg remarked, "I thought you had Jerry's mother here."

"So we have, ma, but she has gone to town for a few days."

At that moment Isabelle came running in, saying, "O, mamma, I 'm afraid I 've been very rude."

"Why, what have you done?" asked Mrs. Hogg.

"Well, mamma, I was standing on the doorsteps when a tall, fair gentleman stopped at the gate and raised his hat to me, and I, instead of bowing to him, as I suppose I ought to have done, felt so shy that I ran into the house, and did n't answer him at all."

"It must have been Tom Russell," said Mrs. Hogg. "I wonder why he did n't come in; he must have guessed that you are Isabelle, and so he bowed to you, my dear; but there is not much harm done; you did not know that it was Tom, and he will only think the better of you for not

being too forward. We are going to his house after breakfast and you will soon get acquainted with all of them."

"You see, mamma, I have been so long in the convent, where we never saw any gentlemen except the doctors and the priests; and then when we went for a walk we were told by the sisters never to speak or return any bows to gentlemen; so that it was natural for me to run away."

Miss Hogg listened to all this talk and thanked God that Tom had not come in. He must have mistaken Isabelle for Lady Florence; what would he think of her for running away from him? O, but he would know soon enough; and he who always stopped in had not done so that morning. Why? Did he already know the truth? No, no; for no one had been to his house as yet; and her heart ached more and more.

Her mother asked her if she was coming with them, but she pleaded indisposition; if she felt better she would come in the evening. The fact was that she did not dare to be present when her mother introduced Isabelle as her adopted daughter; nor had she any intention of going there in the evening.

"O, I understand," said her mother, smiling; "Tom will call for you on his way back, and as there 's no Tom at the farm you don't care to come. Now, Katy, get Miss Isabelle's hat—the blue satin one with white plumes. I want my pet to make a good impression on all my people."

They soon left the house together. When they were gone Miss Hogg retired to her room, a prey to the greatest anxiety she had ever experienced.

Katy saw, from a back window where she had stationed herself, Mrs. Hogg and Isabelle go down the avenue of Russell farm. Her face was pale; she felt her legs giving way under her, and as the ladies disappeared into the house she fell on her knees by the side of her baby's cradle and prayed as she had never done in her life before, for she saw visions of a prison cell for herself, her husband, and her mother-in-law, in her old age; yet, they had not been the principals in this unfortunate affair, but had only obeyed the orders of Miss Hogg, who also would suffer by the scandal, and her father would have to come down with a good big sum of money; she would lose Tom Russell, which

would be a great blow, and she could never expect to marry after that exposure. Katy prayed and sobbed until she felt very ill.

Jerry came in very pale, too, but he said, "Cheer up, Katy, it won't be as bad as you imagine; we did n't hurt the young lady, and she will plead for us. My mother told me when I left her that if Miss Hogg did not soon consent to send her back to her people she would take it upon herself to go to Lady Montgomery with her."

"O, but Jerry, we must not betray Miss Hogg; she has been good to us, and she and I were schoolmates; we must be true to her."

"Well, my dear, we will tell her, and give her a chance to send back the young lady herself; that 's fair. I can't see my wife and mother go to prison, and be transported myself for what we did very innocently at the beginning, for had we known, my mother and I, that she had abducted Lady Florence we would not have helped her."

"That 's all true, Jerry, as far as your mother and yourself are concerned, but I knew it all along, and enjoyed the fun, as I called it, at the time. Still, you are right; the young lady must be sent back to Lady Montgomery."

That same afternoon, when Katy brought Miss Hogg a cup of tea, some new laid eggs, and buttered toast, to her room, as she would not come down and had eaten nothing since breakfast, she found her looking very ill, so she said, "Look here, Mamie, this won't do; if something is not done to relieve your mind you will be ill or go mad. Let Mrs. Jerry take Lady Florence back to Lady Montgomery, and let us all bear the consequences of what will follow; that is our only course. Jerry and his mother think as I do."

"Perhaps you 're right; but wait until I return to New York with my mother; it will be only one week from now, and nothing much can happen in a week."

We shall see if Miss Hogg was right. Katy coaxed her to drink her tea and to eat.

"O, Katy, only think; I just saw Tom going back home and he did not call; he only looked toward the house."

"Well, Mamie, he thinks you are at his house with your mother." Katy's words were balm to Miss Hogg's heart.

Mrs. Hogg and Isabelle came back late that night,

accompanied by Tom, who came in to see Mamie; but Katy told him that she had gone to bed early, not feeling very well. Tom went sadly away. Mrs. Hogg went to her daughter's room and found her up. She said, "What is the meaning of this, have you quarreled with Tom? He looks most unhappy; and you, you are ill and refuse to see him."

"No, ma, we have not quarreled; I could never do that; I am not ill; I will try to sleep and will go down to Russell farm to-morrow. How are they all there?"

"They are all in good health, as far as I can see, but I never saw people more surprised than they were when they saw Isabelle, and I told them that she was my adopted daughter. 'Your adopted daughter,' said my mother, 'how strange! I thought that that'—and she stopped quite confused and would not explain what she meant. My father asked her name, and when I said Isabelle de Courtney they looked at each other and said, 'How strange!' 'What is strange?' I asked, rather sharply, for their mysterious ways did n't please me. 'Nothing,' said my brother, 'but we knew a little girl by the name of Isabelle Reynolds—did you ever hear of her?' 'I never did,' I replied, and no more was said. They all asked after you and expected you to come with Tom, and so did I, my dear."

"My head was so bad, ma, that I thought it best to stay at home, but I 'll go to-morrow."

The next day as Tom passed the house he went in to see Mamie and was surprised to see her looking so ill. He asked, "Can I do anything for you, Mamie?"

"No, Tom," she replied.

"Shall I call here on my way back?"

"No, Tom, dear; I will be at your house before you get home."

She had not looked at him once while speaking to him; he had kissed her hand and left her, not knowing what to make of her. However, he was not to remain long in ignorance, for that afternoon when he reached his home he saw a carriage at the door and he knew that there must be visitors at the house. As he went in he met his sister Mary in the hallway, seemingly on the watch for him; taking him by the arm she drew him into the dining

room, and, after closing the door, she whispered, "Tom, what do you think? Lord Montgomery is here; he has come to see Mamie." Tom turned pale as death. "Did Lord Montgomery love Mamie, perchance," was his first thought.

"What does he want with Mamie?" he asked, sternly.

"O, it is terrible! He said he had been traveling in search of his young cousin whom they lost more than five years ago, and he begged Mamie if she knew anything of her to tell him. Aunt Sophy became very indignant and told us a long story of how she and Mamie had been persecuted in England by him and his mother, and a lot of detectives; and that that was the reason Mamie had retaliated on Walgrave as she had done. What she meant I don't know; but what is sure is that Aunt Sophy knows nothing about the young lady who has been here lately, and that she must be Lord Montgomery's cousin.

"What motive could she have had for abducting the child?"

"I don't know, Mary," replied Tom, sadly, "unless she is crazy; she has acted very strangely toward me lately, and would n't name the day for our marriage, always putting me off as if she feared that something would happen if she married me."

"And yet she loves you, Tom, no one can doubt it; but you had better go in and see what you can make out of the business."

"Don't betray Mamie; we will talk to her when he is gone; I promised Katy that we would be silent, and I must keep my word;" and he walked into the drawing-room with Mary.

Lord Montgomery was just saying, "Miss Hogg, you look ill, and I have no desire to distress you; but if you know anything about Lady Florence I beg of you to tell me; my mother has known no peace since that dreadful night, and I have been traveling from country to country without success. I have come here to see you once more and ask you if you know anything about her."

Miss Hogg was reclining on the sofa and really looked ill; her lips were red and dry; her black eyes had a hunted look in them; that she was exerting herself to remain calm was very evident; her hands were clasped tightly together;

she felt that all eyes were upon her, and, worse than all, that the Russells knew that she was guilty, though her mother did not, and she naturally felt indignant at Lord Montgomery for persisting in his inquiries. Mamie saw Tom come in. How handsome he was! To her loving eyes he seemed handsomer than Lord Montgomery, and she thought, "I have lost him, O, my love, my love!" and her heart hardened against Lord Montgomery as she said to herself, "Had I never seen you and craved your title I would now be a happy woman." She said to him, "If your only hope of recovering Lady Florence rests on me, my lord, I must tell you it is vain."

"Of course it is," said her mother. "How should you know anything about Lord Montgomery's cousin any more than I do? I was nearly driven mad while in London; the detectives actually claimed my Isabelle and searched my room for her. Am I never to be left in peace while that child is with me? She has hardly returned from the convent of the Sacred Heart, where she has been for two years, before she is followed here and claimed as Lady Florence and my own daughter accused of having abducted her."

The Russells saw that Mrs. Hogg meant what she said and that Mamie had deceived her.

"My dear madam," said Lord Montgomery, "you are laboring under a misapprehension; I do not claim the young lady you are speaking of; I saw her at the convent that you have just mentioned while looking for my cousin, and I saw at once that it was not she, as I had been led to believe it was by some of the detectives whom we had employed to search for Lady Florence."

Mrs. Hogg had closed her eyes, being unable to bear the look of pain and wonder so plainly to be seen on the faces of all the Russells.

Lord Montgomery rose to go, saying, "My last hope is gone." Turning to Mrs. Hogg, he continued, "Madam, I am very sorry if my coming here has been an annoyance to you; it was not meant so, and rest assured that I have no intention of claiming the pretty young lady I saw in the garden as I neared the house. May she be a blessing to you, as our Florence was to us!" Bowing to all present, he left the room, Tom opening the door for him.

Tom felt sorry for him, for he looked so disappointed

and had such a noble bearing. After seeing him to his carriage he returned to the room and found that his Aunt Sophy had left to see after Isabelle, whom she feared Lord Montgomery would take away if he had the chance. His grandmother was sitting by the side of Miss Hogg, holding one of her hands in her own, and saying, "Mamie, my child, don't let him go; call him back and tell him; do, my dear."

"No, never; he has wrecked my life and he shall suffer for it. Don't ask me; I can't do it; and I must tell you, grandpa and grandma, I am going back to New York with my mother and I shall never come back again to the farm; I am going to give it to you; in fact, it was for you that I bought it and not for myself."

"No, my child," said both the old people, "we could not accept it; never, my dear. We require no bribe to keep your secret, but we hope that you will think better of it and not bring shame upon our old heads."

"O, I did not mean it as a bribe," said Mamie, big tears rolling down her cheeks; "I always meant the farm to be yours."

The old people, Mary, and Julia were crying. Mr. and Mrs. Russell had left the room so as not to add to Mamie's shame and embarrassment. Tom was as pale as a ghost and had not said one word. John had not been admitted to the drawing-room, as it was feared that something very unpleasant was going to happen. Miss Hogg sobbed for some time; she was a brave woman, as we have had occasion to see, and if she had not loved Tom and his people she would have defended herself in her usual brazen manner and would have got the best of them all; but her love for Tom had changed her nature and had made a better woman of her. Then why did she not give up Lady Florence? Because at that moment she felt very bitter towards Lord Montgomery, for she had lost all hope of marrying Tom, and she knew that without him her life would be a perpetual misery; and, though the day before she had intended to take steps to send her back to her aunt, she now had no such intention; the spirit of revenge was upon her and she would work it to the end, come what might; and as her life was wrecked so should theirs be, as far as lay in her power.

But Mamie could not remain at the farm and meet every day the sad, reproachful looks of the Russells, and see Tom pass the house twice a day, knowing that in his heart he despised her. She sobbed for some time great, dry sobs that shook her all over. No one seemed to know what to say to her for no one could approve of what she had done. If she had shown signs of repentance they would have shown their sympathy for her, tried to console her and help her to right the wrong she had done; but she had refused her grandmother's request and she was making them accomplices by their silence. They felt that they were acting a disgraceful part, knowing, as they did, that she really had Lady Florence, and having remained inactive in the matter by allowing Lord Montgomery to go away when it had been in their power to send him away rejoicing. But at what a fearful cost they would have done it! The betrayal of Mamie and the consequences that would follow, and the breaking of their promise to Tom! They had hoped that Mamie, knowing that all had been discovered, would, after Lord Montgomery's departure, have thrown herself upon their mercy and asked their advice as to the best way of returning the child with as little publicity as possible, and explaining her motives for what she had done; instead of which she had refused all their overtures and advice and had declared herself determined to keep the child at all risks, and was trying to bribe them by offering the farm that they had so long wanted to purchase. Their pride, their honor, rebelled against such an offer, and with one accord the old people had refused; they had felt humiliated at the offer, coming from one of their own blood and whom they had learned to love; so not a word was said by them.

Miss Hogg rose from her seat; the silence that had followed her offer and their refusal was agonizing to her. Turning to Tom, the picture of despair, she said, "Tom, dear Tom, let me call you so for the last time;" and, holding her hands towards him, "do tell grandpa and grandma that it was for them that I bought the farm and that they must accept it; they will never be troubled by me again; do, Tom, for the love that you bore me." But Tom did not take her hands, and with a look of despair he turned away

from her whom he had loved so dearly and still loved, but could never marry now.

When Miss Hogg saw her cousin turn away from her she lifted up her joined hands and said with a tone of anguish impossible to describe, "O, my dream, my dream! it has come true!" and with a cry that resounded through the house she fell to the floor as if dead.

The cry brought her mother to the room, and as she saw her daughter she said, "This is all Lord Montgomery's fault; she was already ill, and this accusation and the excitement have worked upon her nerves. I have never known her to faint before."

Everything possible was done to revive her and at last she opened her eyes, said, "Mother, take me home," and closed them again. She was taken back to the farm where she had enjoyed so many happy days, but which was hateful to her now. Her mother and Katy attended her. She refused to see any of the Russells when they called and her mother could not understand her motives, for she would not even see Tom, and she thought that her daughter was losing her reason. Katy understood her, and was herself very far from well, for she had been told by Mamie of Lord Montgomery's visit to the Russells.

Miss Hogg did not take to her bed as it was feared she would, but insisted on getting up the next day; she sat in an easy chair near one of the windows in the drawing-room, where she could see all who came in or went out. Whom did she expect? She hardly knew; certainly not the person she saw coming towards the house on the third day after the events recorded. A cold shiver ran through her as she recognized the tall and gentlemanly form of Walgrave. He looked far better than when she had seen him last; his step was elastic, and he walked like a man who has a purpose to accomplish. Had he come to arrest her? Was he going to revenge himself on her for the insults she had heaped upon him? Had his love turned to hate? She no longer cared, for she had lost Tom and life was becoming a burden to her. Everything was so dark. She heard his ring at the door and her heart stood still, for she thought of the disgrace to all her people.

CHAPTER LX.

We left Walgrave on his way to Mr. Hogg's mansion in Fifth avenue, New York, which he never reached; for as he passed Madison square he saw a tall, dark gentleman, decidedly English and whom he fancied that he had seen before; so, stopping his cab quite close to the hotel which he saw this gentleman enter, he raised his hand to his forehead and reflected: who was he and where had he seen him? It came to him like a flash; it was Lord Montgomery, though very much altered; he was stouter, more manly; five years had changed him; he was handsomer than ever, but more subdued looking. Walgrave alighted from his cab, dismissed it, entered the hotel, and handing his portmanteau to a waiter, he walked into the parlor and came face to face with Lord Montgomery, who recognized him at once and said, "Mr. Walgrave, I believe; have you come on the same errand as I have?"

"I am certainly pleased to meet you, Lord Montgomery, very much pleased; but perhaps you are not aware that I am no longer a detective. I gave up the business some years ago. Have you succeeded in tracing your cousin yet?"

"Yes, we all believe that Miss Hogg had something to do with her disappearance, but we have not been able to prove it."

"Are you following any clew now, Lord Montgomery?" asked Walgrave, anxiously.

"No, it was on a momentary impulse that I came here. I was at a party in Liverpool when I heard that a steamer was to leave for New York at midnight; it was then after ten; I left the party, went to a hotel, wrote my name in the visitors' book, sent a telegram to my mother, boarded the steamer, and here I am."

"And have you taken any steps in the matter—I mean have you detectives at work here?"

"No, but I have called on Miss Hogg and begged of her to tell me if she had anything to do with my

cousin's disappearance; she has denied it, as usual, and her mother was very much offended at me for making the inquiry. It is quite evident that if Miss Hogg has done the deed her mother does not know it; she seems to be a very superior woman."

"Where is Miss Hogg, at her father's in Fifth avenue?"

"No, I went there first and was told that she was in the country, near Jefferson City, Missouri; it appears that her mother's people live there; their name is Russell; they are respectable farmers. Miss Hogg looked ill when I saw her."

"Do you think your sudden appearance gave her a shock and made her look ill?"

"No, for her mother remarked that she was ill, and that my insulting questions were making her worse. I left Russell farm with my hopes crushed. Will you go and see her?"

"Perhaps, but not as a detective;" and he left Lord Montgomery and went to his room. Having dined, he was soon on his way to the west, and on reaching Russell farm he gave the Russells another shock when he asked to see Miss Hogg, and introduced himself as Mr. Walgrave to Mary Russell, who had gone to the door. Her first thought was that he had come to arrest her cousin, but after a second look at his kind and handsome face she doubted it. She told him that Miss Hogg lived on the next farm and pointed out the house to him, saying that Miss Hogg was her cousin, and she was sorry to say that she was ill, and that any shock would be bad for her; that she hoped he was not the bearer of unwelcome news.

Walgrave saw by Mary's eyes that something had happened to make them suspicious of Miss Hogg, and he hastened to say, "No, Miss Russell, I hope to be able to make everything right for your cousin by removing the cause of her anxiety; I am her friend, not her enemy;" and raising his hat, he had gone to Mamie's farm with joyful step, as we have seen him; he felt happy, for he had not arrived too late to save her.

Lord Montgomery knew nothing of the lawyer's discovery; it was by mere chance that he had come to America, but he must hurry and not let the grass grow under his feet, for at any moment a telegram might come from

either the lawyer or Mathew to arrest Miss Hogg. He was ahead of them so far, and he would keep ahead if he had to hide Miss Hogg from them while he was sending back Lady Florence to Lady Montgomery; and he gave the bell a pull that brought Katy to the door in a hurry; she screamed as she recognized Walgrave, and would have run away but that Walgrave caught her by the arm, saying, "I must see your mistress at once; it is to save her that I am here; do you understand? She is in danger; let me see her at once."

But before Katy could speak Mrs. Hogg appeared on the scene, and having recognized Walgrave, she said, "My daughter is ill and you shall not see her. Are we never to be left in peace?"

"My dear madam, you mistake my motive in coming here; I have not come to make trouble for anyone in this house, but to bring peace. Tell your daughter that I am here and wish to see her, and if she refuses to see me I will not insist on an interview."

The drawing-room door opened and Miss Hogg appeared, her face flushed and tears in her eyes; she said, "Come in, Mr. Walgrave, I will see you."

Her mother stood for a moment mute with surprise; then she said to Katy, as Walgrave walked into the room and she heard Mamie locking the door after them, "Well, Katy, after all, I think she will marry Walgrave, or why should she have asked him in with such a flushed face and tears in her eyes?"

Katy did not answer, but she felt much relieved that Walgrave was with her mistress, for she had guessed that his love for her had brought him there, and that he had come to save her if he could, and not to expose her, as she had feared on seeing him. Miss Hogg had heard all that had been said in the hall, and her heart softened as she guessed that his great and unselfish love for her had brought him to see her in her great trouble; she felt that she did not deserve it, for had she not crushed that noble heart, and instead of seeking revenge as she was doing, he was exposing his own reputation to come and save her, for she had heard him use those words. She would see him; she would tell him all, and take his advice in this overwhelming trouble that she alone had made

for herself, for now that she was softening she saw herself as she really was. Walgrave's noble and forgiving nature had opened her eyes and she repented sincerely of what she had done. Would to God that she had done so before she had lost Tom's love and respect, and had wrecked his life and her own as she had done. Poor Walgrave, who had really done her no injury, but had loved her too well, and after all these years cared for her enough to come so far to rescue her from ruin! No wonder that her face was flushed with shame and her eyes were filled with tears at Walgrave's goodness of heart as she asked him in.

Two hours passed and they could still be heard talking and Miss Hogg sobbing; then what seemed soft words of comfort coming from Walgrave. Mrs. Hogg was at a loss to understand what her daughter had to say to Walgrave, why she wept, and what were the soft words that he seemed to be saying to her. Were they making it up? It seemed very much like it to her. Was Mamie going to throw Tom over? Had she sent for her old lover to come back to her, and what did he mean by saying that he had come to save her? Did he mean save her from Tom? If so, she wished he had stayed away and had allowed her to marry Tom.

But here was Tom himself coming to the house. What was going to happen between the two men? They must not meet. But what was Katy about, knocking at Mamie's door and saying, "Mr. Tom Russell is here, Miss Hogg; you must see him;" and Mr. Walgrave had opened the door and said, "You are right, Katy, show him in here," and Tom, just entering the hall, the rivals met face to face.

"Come in, Mr. Russell," said Walgrave; "I was about to send for you."

Tom looked at the sad but noble looking face of the man who had loved Mamie before he himself had ever seen her. Mamie's eyes were very red and there was a soft look in them that he had never seen there before; she arose as he entered and said, "Tom, I know that I have lost your love and respect; still, allow me to present to you Mr. Walgrave, a true and honorable gentleman whom I have deeply wronged, and who has taken his revenge by rendering me a great service; in fact, he has lifted the cloud

of dishonor from our heads brought there by me. He will explain everything to you; and though my deeds have parted you and me I hope that you will not hate me when you know all."

The two men looked at each other and read each other's noble nature; their hands clasped, and without a word having been spoken between them, they felt that they were friends. Walgrave explained how Miss Hogg, believing herself insulted by Lord and Lady Montgomery, had, in a moment of anger, taken Lady Florence, intending to send her back in a short time, but had not seen her way clear to do it without danger, and that the longer she had kept her the harder it had become; that when she had become engaged to her cousin the fear of losing him had kept her silent, and that was why she had deferred her marriage so often; in fact, Walgrave made so light of the affair that it no longer looked like a crime to Tom; "and everything is going to be set right; and I, who know every incident in the case, have come here purposely to settle matters to the general satisfaction, and to see you all happy; and if I can see the woman I once loved happily married to the man she loves I shall return to England contented, for her happiness makes mine; and to see her life wrecked for a youthful, foolish trick would break my heart. I do not hesitate to say this to the man she loves, for my affection for her is pure and honorable;" and Walgrave threw back his head proudly, like a man who knows and feels that no one can find fault with his conduct.

Miss Hogg's sobs could be heard though she had buried her face in the sofa cushions; she did not dare hope that Tom would forgive her; and Walgrave's noble pleading for her happiness touched her heart as nothing had ever done before. What a brave and noble heart his was! How could he forgive her, as he was doing, after all the insults she had heaped upon him? And loving her as he still did, he was pleading with another man to love her and make her happy. How unworthy she felt of the sacrifice that good man was making for her!

Tom had listened to Walgrave with wonder and respect, for he read the man's heart well, and knew what he must be suffering. He rose from his chair, and going up to him

held out his hand, and with tears in his eyes, and his voice trembling with emotion, said, "You are a better man than I am; you have done what I could not do—give my loved one to another man and ask him to make her happy. O, Mr. Walgrave, you deserve her more than I do!"

But Walgrave murmured, "She does not love me, and her whole heart is yours; make her happy, and I am your friend for life."

"I will," answered Tom, "if it lies in my power; and I am proud of your friendship"

Walgrave left the room, and meeting Katy in the hall asked for Mrs. Hogg, to whom, having spoken a few words, they both left the house and Katy saw them going to Russell farm. She knew that Walgrave had made everything right between Tom and Mamie, and that he was on his way to try to do the same with the Russells. He seemed to be talking earnestly to Mrs. Hogg, and she to be listening attentively to what he said. Then she saw them stop near the large apple tree where Isabelle and John were sitting reading, for they had become great friends. John had taken more naturally to Isabelle than to Lady Florence; he felt more free with her and treated her like a sister, which he had never done with Lady Florence; her he had admired and liked as he would a queen, but nothing more; but with Isabelle he could read, play, and race as if she had been a member of the family.

Let us see why Walgrave had stopped so suddenly near the two children. He had been explaining matters to Mrs. Hogg, who was greatly shocked and surprised at what her daughter had done, though he had made as light of it as he possibly could. When he caught sight of Isabelle he stood still, and looked at her with great emotion written on every line of his face, as he exclaimed, "O, what a resemblance!" and his hand went to his heart as if to suppress its beating.

"Resemblance to whom?" asked Mrs. Hogg.

"To my dear young wife whom I lost thirteen years ago, when she was drowned under my very eyes."

"How terrible!" said Mrs. Hogg; "you have known trouble, Mr. Walgrave; and have you any children?"

"No, madam; we were only married one year; but we had the hope of soon having one. From that time all

happiness was crushed out of my life until I met your daughter and loved her as I had never loved before; and for a second time my heart was crushed; and now all I wish is to see her happy. Help me, Mrs. Hogg, with your influence over your people to make her so."

"You have a noble heart, Mr. Walgrave. May God reward you!" Mrs. Hogg answered with tears in her soft eyes. "But how strange that Isabelle should resemble your lost wife!"

"Isabelle—did you say her name is Isabelle? My wife's name was Isabelle de Courtney."

"Why," said Mrs. Hogg, greatly surprised, "that is my Isabelle's name! What a strange coincidence, unless she is related to your late wife! But here we are at the farm; we will discuss the matter another time, and I will tell you all about her; for after what you have just done for Mamie I consider you a friend of the family."

Mr. Walgrave thanked Mrs. Hogg, and they both entered the farmhouse, where we shall leave them, and return to Miss Hogg, who was now on the best of terms with her cousin Tom, he having forgiven all after the departure of Walgrave. His noble conduct had made a great impression on Tom, and he had forgiven Mamie with all his heart and had forbidden her to say another word about the matter, but asked her to forget it, as he would; so that they were happy once more—happier than ever before, for there were no secrets between them; and after having so nearly lost each other the reaction was great from the depths of sorrow and misery to perfect bliss.

Katy had been called in and told that everything was righted. She was to send Jerry to his mother to explain that she was to keep herself in readiness to leave for England with Lady Florence and Miss Hogg on the next day. Katy withdrew, well pleased that all her troubles were over, and that after all Miss Hogg would not lose Tom, for she had not been slow to see how matters stood between them. She said to herself, "And to think that it is Walgrave who has brought them together again! O, but he 's a good man, to forgive Mamie, as he has done!"

It had been arranged between Walgrave and Miss Hogg that she was to leave for England on the next day, taking Lady Florence and a servant with her; and, as Katy could

not leave her baby, old Mrs. Jerry would have to go with them. They must not delay their departure, for he feared that at any moment the lawyer or Mathew would either come, or telegraph, which would be worse, for their coming would take some time, and a telegram only a few minutes; and that she must induce her father and her friends to believe that she was going abroad to buy her trousseau; no one would think it strange, as nearly all of the American ladies who belonged to the four hundred, as she did, get most of their dresses from England and Paris; and Miss Hogg had replied, "It will not be all deceit, for I will have my wedding dress made in England."

"And, Miss Hogg, I must tell you that I mean to accompany you, for all danger is not yet over. Should you on your arrival in England meet Mathew, or others who may have heard of your departure here for England, it would prove disastrous to our plans; and if I am with you I will protect you, not as a detective, but as a friend. I have not come here to leave my task half done; I must finish it, and will only leave you when you are in the safe keeping of Mr. Tom Russell."

No wonder that Miss Hogg had cried and sobbed and had asked his pardon for her treatment of him. How noble was his conduct towards her! And he had added, "Now that all the trouble is removed you must look happy and well, for your illness is only mental, and you will be well enough to leave here to-morrow."

That statement proved to be correct. She felt most anxious to be gone.

Walgrave, after having settled matters with the Russells, remained at the farm for the night so as to accompany Miss Hogg on the next day, for he would not allow her a moment out of his sight; he knew that the danger was not over and the reward was great and tempting; that should the lawyer, or even Mathew, meet Miss Hogg, having collected proof enough to have her arrested, it would be hard, even for him, to keep her out of their hands. A thought came to him, and he made up his mind to make use of it as soon as he arrived in New York, and he did so. After taking Mamie to her father's office in Wall street to tell him of her intended departure for England and get a good big check, he left her at a small hotel, where he

would call for her to take her to the steamer. He had adopted this plan as the safest, for anyone coming to arrest Miss Hogg would naturally go to the house first, not to her father's office, nor to a small hotel. After seeing her safely there, he called for his portmanteau at the hotel where he had seen Lord Montgomery, and inquired if he was still there, and was told that he was in the billiard room; he sent in his card and had the pleasure of seeing Lord Montgomery in less than five minutes. Walgrave accosted him, saying, "My lord, will you grant me a favor without inquiring into my motive for asking it? It refers to your cousin."

"Certainly, Walgrave. What is it you wish me to do?"

"It is this, my lord, that you withdraw at once the reward offered for the recovery of Lady Florence."

"Double it, you mean?"

"No, Lord Montgomery, withdraw it, and I promise you news of your cousin in less than a month."

"I will do so on my return to England."

"No, no, it must be done at once; send a telegram to Scotland Yard, and one to Lawyer Bridgewell, that nothing will be paid under any circumstances. Let them think it strange if they wish. Will you do it?"

"Yes, Mr. Walgrave; I don't see through your motive, still I know that you must have some clew."

He wrote the two telegrams and gave them to Walgrave, who soon had them sent, saying to himself, "This will stop the lawyer's game if he is not already on his way here. As for Mathew, he will see a screw loose, and it may not stop him unless he gets positive orders from headquarters; then he must obey. Ah, Mathew, we shall see which of us shall win the game. You made a mistake when you came to me in Southampton. Did you imagine that I would remain inactive and see the woman I love brought to shame and disgrace? You have never loved, my friend, or you would have kept away from me. I want no reward for what I am doing; only Mamie's happiness; and you shall not lay a finger on her while I stand by."

Walgrave was so excited that he looked ten years younger; he had a look of triumph in his dark eyes and he held his head up proudly; he was no longer dejected and broken-hearted, as we saw him at the ruins reading his

paper; he seemed to have found new life and energy. He got Miss Hogg to go aboard the steamer long before the time of departure, and told her to remain in her stateroom until the steamer was on her way; that he would see after Lady Florence and Mrs. Jerry, whom he also brought on board before the arrival of other passengers. He remained on deck to watch if any detectives were on the lookout for Miss Hogg; he had taken her passage under the name of Russell—two Misses Russell and servant, including Lady Florence, as it would look less conspicuous than different names. Miss Hogg, feigning seasickness, remained much in her room, and Lady Florence remained with her to nurse her and keep her company. She understood that Miss Hogg was running a great risk until they arrived at Lady Montgomery's, and she had learned to love her and would have been sorry to see her come to grief for having taken her away from her aunt. She had been told that Miss Hogg had done it in a moment of anger, but she was still in ignorance of her real motives, nor was it necessary that she should know. Walgrave had not told her more than he could help. They arrived in Liverpool in due time. Miss Hogg and Lady Florence were to remain below until the other passengers had left the ship, and Walgrave would be on deck looking for any detectives who might have been sent to watch the arrival of the American steamer; he knew their cut, and it was possible that they would not get ashore as easily as they had got on board; for if anyone had telegraphed to New York about Miss Hogg, her father, who knew that she had gone to England, would say so, not knowing of his daughter's danger.

Walgrave's precautions proved not to be in vain, for as the steamer ran into the harbor he saw Mathew standing among the crowd; Walgrave drew back behind one of the boats, signaled to Mrs. Jerry, and, pointing out Mathew to her, said: "You know him; it is Mathew. He may or may not know that your mistress is on board; I am going to speak to him and find out if he is alone; if he is, you will see me walk away with him. As soon as we are gone you take the ladies to the train and go straight to Southampton to this address. Here is a letter to my housekeeper that I wrote in case of emergency. I will rejoin you there when I have got rid of Mathew."

Mrs. Jerry watched Mathew with great anxiety. Were they going to fail at the last moment when everything had been so well arranged by Walgrave? Was Mathew going to be the stumbling-block on their way to happiness? If Mathew knew that Miss Hogg was on board, not even Walgrave could prevent him from arresting her—not by force, for he had the law on his side and would use it. Would Walgrave's great love for Miss Hogg point out a way to him by which he could throw Mathew off the track? If anyone could do it he could. His eyes had shone with courage and determination and it would go hard with anyone who tried to take Miss Hogg from him.

Walgrave walked toward Mathew with a firm step, and tapped him on the shoulder, for Mathew had not seen him, nor had he expected to see him there, judging by the start he gave as he saw who had tapped him on the shoulder. Mrs. Jerry could not hear what they said, but after some words had been exchanged they both stood looking at the passengers as they left the steamer; then, when apparently the last one had left, Walgrave had passed his arm through that of Mathew, and they had left the pier together and soon disappeared around the corner of one of the streets, and Mrs. Jerry, seeing that the coast was clear, came out of her hiding place behind one of the boats, went down to her mistress, and in a few words told her what she had witnessed and what Walgrave had said, giving her the letter. They hurried on deck, signaled a cab, and soon had their trunks on top and themselves inside of it, and, ordering the cabman to drive to the station, Miss Hogg drew down the blinds and sat in her seat. She wore a thick veil, and so did Lady Florence. Not a word was spoken between them; each knew that there was danger; should Mathew suspect Walgrave he would soon have every train watched. Mrs. Jerry bought the tickets, and they were soon on board the train, for, as luck would have it, one was just on the point of starting, and it was an express that was taking the mails to London. Nothing could prevent their reaching Southampton except a telegram, and if they passed London safely they would probably not be molested during the remainder of the journey; for should Mathew learn by some mischance that they had left by that train he would naturally think that they had got off at London,

and they felt very much relieved when they had passed every station through London. In a few hours more to their great joy they arrived in Southampton.

Miss Hogg hurried Lady Florence into a cab, while Mrs. Jerry looked after the trunks; then, having written Walgrave's address, she gave it to the cabman, and as it was getting dark he was not surprised that the lady told him to go as fast as he could, for it was a ride of more than two miles along the coast.

In about half an hour he bawled out, "Here be the place, mum," and helped them down; then he tried the gate, but it was locked and it was some time before they could make anyone hear, though a large dog was barking furiously. At last the cottage door was opened by an old woman holding a lighted candle above her head and calling out, "Is it you, sir? Have you come back?"

"Come here, woman," yelled cabby, "we can't talk to you so far off." So she walked down the graveled path, her candle going out on the way. She looked very much surprised when she saw it was not her master, but ladies.

"It must be a mistake," she began, but Miss Hogg cut her short by saying:

"There 's no mistake; we are relatives of Mr. Walgrave; he will be here in a few minutes; here is a letter which will explain all. Open the gate."

Miss Hogg spoke as one accustomed to be obeyed; she walked up to the house with Lady Florence by her side, leaving Mrs. Jerry to settle with the cabman and have him bring the trunks to the door. The housekeeper having lighted the lamp in the sitting room, they went in, feeling a sense of security that they had not experienced for many hours. They were very tired and hungry, and Miss Hogg asked that supper be served as soon as possible.

The housekeeper, having read her master's letter, was all attention, and in less than an hour a very good meal was set before them. Then the spare room was prepared for the two ladies, and Mrs. Jerry was to sleep with the housekeeper or on the sofa in the back room, and she wisely chose the housekeeper's bed as more comfortable after the long journey.

The housekeeper, whose name was Mrs. Grant, was really a very nice old person, but excessively inquisitive;

she liked to find out people's business, even that of her master, which greatly displeased him, and sometimes made him use rather strong language to her, as we have seen when he left the cottage; still, she was a very respectable old woman.

Miss Hogg and Lady Florence occupied the same room and were pleased to do so, for they had much to say to each other, and could be heard talking long after they retired. At last everything was still in the house; every one slept peacefully; Miss Hogg had not slept so soundly for many years. When she awoke the sun was shining brightly; Lady Florence was up and dressed and she smiled at her as she opened her eyes.

"Well, Mamie, you have slept well?"

"Yes, my dear, I never slept better in all my life; and to think that I am under Mr. Walgrave's roof enjoying such peace; has he come home yet?"

"No, Mamie, he has not; Mrs. Jerry is feeling very uneasy about him, and says that if he does n't make his appearance very soon we shall have to go to my aunt's without him; for should Mathew have outwitted him, he will be here himself instead of Mr. Walgrave; and, as you know, nothing that we can say will prevent his arresting you, for the reward offered is a thousand pounds, and he 's not going to lose that."

"My dear Florence," said Miss Hogg, laughing, to the great surprise of Lady Florence, "there is no longer any reward offered for your recovery. I forgot to tell you so; Mr. Walgrave had it withdrawn before leaving America, so that Mathew will gain nothing by coming after us; still, he might do it out of revenge for all the trouble I have given him; but Mr. Walgrave is a clever man and will never allow Mathew to outwit him, if he has to keep close to him all the time; and he will manage to let us know what he wishes us to do."

Miss Hogg had perfect faith in Walgrave's great love for her, and she knew he would never allow her to be taken; if he did not come he would send a telegram. She dared not tell Lady Florence that Walgrave loved her, but she said, "We are safe in his hands and will soon see him or hear from him."

She had been dressing during this conversation, and

after saying her prayers more devoutly than she had done for a long time, they both went downstairs just in time to see the postman give a letter to Mrs. Grant, who turned to Miss Hogg, saying, "A letter for you, Miss Russell." Miss Hogg opened it and read:

"Dear Miss Hogg: Do not feel anxious; I will be with you by two p.m. to-day. Be ready with the young lady to start with me for Lady Montgomery's residence. All is well. I left Mathew in London. Your sincere friend, HENRY WALGRAVE."

Miss Hogg turned the letter over to Lady Florence and said, "Let us have breakfast; I 'm starved; my appetite has come back to beat the band."

"To beat what?" said Lady Florence, laughing.

"Well, you know what I mean; my appetite has returned wonderfully since I left America."

They entered the breakfast room and found the table laid in good style. Mrs. Grant and Mrs. Jerry had been up since five o'clock, helping each other, and had hot milk rolls, ham and eggs, a meat pie, smoking hot, with coffee and the sweetest of cream and butter. The silverware and porcelain were of the best. Miss Hogg looked at all these dainties and tears came to her eyes as she thought, "This is all by Walgrave's orders—dear, good Walgrave, whom I have treated so shamefully. O, if I could only undo all the wrong that I have done him!"

Her great repentance seemed to bring a blessing on Walgrave's home, for they no sooner seated themselves at the table than a poorly dressed old woman was seen coming toward the house, for the large Newfoundland dog allowed her to pass him, only wagging his tail as she passed.

"What do you want, old Nancy?" asked Mrs. Grant, as she saw who had knocked at the door. "I can't give you much, for my master is n't at home."

"I have n't come to beg," answered old Nancy; "I only want to see Mr. Walgrave. Me and my old man wants to tell him something that we 're sure he 'd like to know; we can't rest till he knows it."

"My master won't be back till to-morrow," replied Mrs. Grant; "can't you tell me? It will be quite safe

with me, whatever it may be, and as soon as he comes back I 'll tell him."

"Can't do it, mum; Mr. Walgrave might n't like it; it 's something that happened long ago, and my old man and me just found it out last night. I 'll come again to-morrow, for our old place is not fit for him to come into, though he did come to us when my old man was sick, sent in a doctor and paid the bill, and when my old man got better he got him a new fishing boat, as his had been knocked to pieces by the waves while he was sick. O, Mr. Walgrave is a good gentleman, and if we had only known years ago what we do now—but good mornin', mum, I won't take no more of your time;" and she hobbled away.

Miss Hogg and Lady Florence had heard every word. "O," thought Miss Hogg, "what a noble man! what a heart of gold he has!" and giving Mrs. Jerry a twenty shilling piece in gold, she said, "Give the old creature that; she is one of Mr. Walgrave's *protégées.*"

Mr. Walgrave, after the exposure that had attended his betrothal to Miss Hogg, had retired from the force, and had come to live a quiet life in this pretty half cottage and half villa, with a flower garden; he had nursed his grief for a while, and then had turned his mind, and part of his income, to relieving the poor and doing good in the neighborhood. He had met old Nancy and her husband in one of his walks along the coast. He seemed never to tire of looking at the large waves and big rollers as they came breaking on the beach; they seemed to have an attraction for him; the reader already knows why, as we have explained it. He had helped old James Gray in his illness and had bought him a new boat when his old weather-beaten one had gone to pieces during his illness. It had cost Walgrave thirty pounds for the boat alone, and they looked upon him as their benefactor.

Now what could those two old people have learned the night previous of sufficient importance to make Nancy call at Walgrave's cottage? An old friend of her husband, whom they had not met for over twenty years, had been to see them the day before, and, though the Grays were poor, they did all in their power to give him a welcome. Old Nancy went out and bought tobacco, pipes, a pot of

beer, and half a bottle of brandy, eggs, and a rasher of bacon. Some of my readers will say that the Grays, being poor, might have dispensed with the drink and tobacco, and I heartily agree with them; but my knowledge of the world has taught me that people of the lower order cannot enjoy themselves without drink, and that they will get it if starvation stares them in the face; they look upon it as a necessity of life.

The poverty of the lower classes, with some few exceptions, can be traced to drink and high living, and also attending parties and theaters, riding on Sunday, gambling, etc.—what they call having a good time, and what I call a sinful time. After these indulgences in sin can they say their prayers with a pure heart and go to rest in peace, ready to meet their Maker should it be his will to call them that very night? So few ever think of saying any prayers; they are too tired, too sleepy. I have known people who have not said a prayer for thirty years, who had been religiously brought up by their parents; and others who never learned to say a prayer. How strange that they could not learn to pray, even if they had not been properly taught! They did not need much teaching to learn the wicked ways of the world.

But to return to the Grays and their guest, John Brown by name. After they had all had a good supper the two men lighted their pipes and began to talk about old times, while old Nancy mixed brandy and hot water for three, and brightened up the fire.

"Well," said John, "you seem to be pretty cozy here; you must be making money; I suppose you have a good stocking somewhere, eh?" slapping Grav on the back, nearly making him swallow his pipe.

"We jog along," replied Gray, "but we have nothing laid by."

"What! Whose boat is that drawn up on the beach in front of your cottage? I felt sure it was yours; it cost a good penny, that it did."

"It is mine," said Gray, "but it was given to me after my old one was smashed to pieces by the waves when I was down with the fever."

"You must have rich people hereabout to be able to give such a boat, and I 'm glad of it, old fellow."

"It was Mr. Walgrave who gave it to me; you must have passed his house in coming, for it 's about half a mile from here; it has a beautiful garden; I never saw more beautiful flowers; and the house is a fine one and large for him, for he is alone excepting his housekeeper; he must be a bachelor, for I have never seen him with a lady."

"Walgrave," repeated Brown; "it is not a common name; I once knew a gentleman by that name; he was a detective and got married at the church I was vestry clerk at at the time."

"Strange," said old Nancy; "it can't be him, for this one has no wife."

"Nor has the one I am speaking about; he lost her in that terrible shipwreck by the Needles; he and his wife were returning from a pleasure trip from the island of Jersey; the boat in which she was was upset and her husband saw her, from the deck where he stood, sink to the bottom of the sea. The papers were full of it at the time. The young husband wanted to jump overboard to die with his young wife, but was kept back by some one, and he lay between life and death for months afterwards, so I should n't wonder if your Mr. Walgrave was the same. I saw him get married. What kind of a looking man is your Mr. Walgrave?"

"O, he 's a tall, handsome man, with fine black eyes and pale complexion; he must have had black hair and mustache, but now they are mixed with gray, and yet he does n't look more than forty years old; he 's quite a gentleman, but looks very sad at times. He loves to sit by the sea."

"Well, then, I 'll bet my head that he 's the same. Your description agrees with that of the one I saw get married; his wife was a fair beauty with hair like gold and eyes as blue as the skies; she, too, was tall, and every one said they were a well-matched couple; he so dark and she so fair; no wonder that he nearly went mad when he lost her; and when he saw her sink he cried with heart-rending anguish, 'O, my Isabelle, my Isabelle!' Those who heard him never forgot that cry. But what 's the matter with your wife, Gray?" as old Nancy, with a cry of "O, my God!" dropped to the floor as if shot. Old Gray was also

very pale, but of course it was natural, seeing his wife drop from her chair as she had done. They picked her up, rubbed her hands, poured brandy down her throat, and burned feathers under her nose until she must have been nearly choked. At last she opened her eyes.

"O, James, it must be the"——

But before she could say more Gray had caught her by the arm, and with a warning look, he said, "Yes, Nancy, it must be the heat and our tobacco smoke; the room 's so small; you 'll be better now; I 'll open the window to give you fresh air."

"Yes, yes, James, that 's it. I 'm getting all right; don't mind me." And turning to John Brown, she said, "That was a nice name you were just saying—Isabelle—I wonder what was her other name; of course you don't know it?"

"Indeed I do; was n't I there when she signed her name in the vestry? And I still remember it; for, as Mr. Nolan, the minister, said at the time, they both had uncommon names—Henry Walgrave and Isabelle de Courtney."

Old Nancy's eyes nearly popped out of her head, and Brown, noticing her, said, "I 'm afraid, Gray, that your wife is going off again."

"No, no," said Nancy, "but I 'm not well, and if you will excuse me I 'll go to bed."

"Well, you see," said Gray, "Nancy is subject to these fits, though I did n't like to tell you before; women don't like to have those things known; she 'll be all right when she goes to bed."

"Well, I 'm sorry for you both, old chap, and perhaps I 'd better be going, for I 'm keeping you from her."

"No, John, I can do her no good; I 'm sorry that she 's happened to have one of her fits while you were here; but after twenty years you and I have much to say to one another, and I 'm glad that you have told me about Mr. Walgrave; I could n't make out why he was so sad. How long ago did you see him get married?"

"Well, let me think; I was then sixty years old, and I 'm now nearly seventy-four; that 's it; so that it must be going on fifteen years, or thereabouts; that 's as near as I can make it; and I was sixty-one at the time of the ship-

wreck; but you must remember it, Gray, for you lived here at the time, I believe."

"O, yes," replied Gray, with a troubled look in his eyes, "I remember; it was dreadful, but as I did not know Mr. Walgrave at the time I could n't feel bad about him as I do now. I feel awful queer."

And he really looked bad, and John Brown thought to himself, "How tender hearted Gray is; he is a good old fellow." He said, "Come, Gray, don't be down in the mouth; take a good stiff glass of brandy and water, it will set you right again."

So they both had a stiff glass and they said no more about Mr. Walgrave, but talked of their young days until it was time for John Brown to leave; but he promised to come again before he left for London.

James Gray seemed relieved when he had gone. After locking the cottage door he went into the next room to his wife, whom he found very much excited. They had a long conference together and the result was what we have seen—Nancy asking to see Mr. Walgrave to tell him something of great importance; she looked uneasy and nervous while asking for him, and greatly disappointed when told that he was away; and she had given a start when Mrs. Grant had called her back to give her the sovereign that Mrs. Jerry had passed to her, as she did not wish to be seen by anyone.

CHAPTER LXI.

MATHEW was very much surprised at seeing Walgrave in Liverpool—so surprised that he actually started when he saw who had touched him on the shoulder, and he had exclaimed, "You here, Mr. Walgrave, and with a portmanteau! Are you going to America? If so, come with me, for I intend going on the next steamer that leaves here for New York."

It was evident to Walgrave that Mathew had no idea that he had just come from America; he could not have seen him come ashore, and he thought it best not to enlighten him on the subject; so he replied, "No, Mathew, I 'm not going to America; I 'm going back home. I 've been visiting some friends for the past few weeks and I think it has done me good. I have taken your advice, you see. That 's a steamer from America, just in, is n't it?"

"Yes; I was looking at the passengers coming ashore."

"Did you perchance expect to see Miss Hogg?" laughing merrily.

"Well, not exactly; though if I had the power to draw her to England by wishing she would be here and save me the trouble of going after her. I don't relish the trip."

"Have you evidence enough to warrant your going?" asked Walgrave.

"Yes; everything is correct this time; there 's no escape for her. I 'm only sorry that I shall have to share the reward with Bridgewell, for I have done the work; true, he gave me the clew, still, I would rather have shared it with you, Mr. Walgrave."

"Thank you, Mathew, I don't deserve you kind wishes; but look here, all the passengers are gone and we had better go where you 're staying; I 'll put off my departure for a few hours since I have met you," and passing his arm through that of Mathew, he walked him away, as Mrs. Jerry had seen, and never looked back; for Mathew was

cute, and had he seen Walgrave look back it might have occurred to him that Walgrave had some one on board to whom he wished to signal unperceived by him, and that he himself had been a passenger on board that steamer. Then who could be on board who must not be seen by him? Miss Hogg, by all that is wonderful! Walgrave's heart beat fast as he walked arm in arm with him and saw him looking at his portmanteau in a rather suspicious manner instead of answering his questions as to where he was staying, so he hastened to say, "Do you know what I heard a week ago? That Lady Montgomery had withdrawn the reward offered for Lady Florence; is that true?"

"Can't be," replied Mathew, his mind deserting Miss Hogg and Walgrave's portmanteau in a moment, and centering on the reward.

"Then why should there have been such a report, and for what purpose? But since you have n't heard of it of course it must be a false report, for they would have apprised you of it at once."

"As for that," said Mathew, looking very much troubled, "they could not very well do it, for I have been traveling from place to place, sometimes on a wrong track, then a right one. I have had trouble, I can assure you. What a clever woman that Miss Hogg is! If she had only had Lady Florence with her we could have traced her in no time; but when we thought we had her she faced us with the other fair little beauty. I wonder where she got her. I was sent to Paris after her, thinking that she must be Lady Florence—she is the same age—and when I got there she was gone, which strengthened my belief, though the mother superioress said that Lord Montgomery had been there himself and had declared that this young lady was not the one he was looking for, and she apparently spoke the truth; she said the young lady who had been with them had left for America, so I retraced my steps. But here we are at my hotel; it is only a restaurant, but good enough for a day or two."

They went in and asked to have breakfast served in a private room, where they could continue their conversation. When the waiter had left the room Walgrave asked, "Did you discover where Lady Florence had gone?"

"Yes, after a great deal of hunting, for they would

all have it that her old nurse had taken her to Australia, and I knew that that could not be so, as Lawyer Bridgewell's letter had been returned from there, and that the old nurse could be no one else than Jerry's mother. Those Jerrys have been a great help to Miss Hogg, I can tell you; she was lucky to find them. I thought where Miss Hogg is the Jerrys are sure to return; so having ascertained that Miss Hogg was in New York and had not been in Europe for nearly two years, I was certain that Mrs. Jerry would return to her after having placed the child elsewhere; so I went from hotel to hotel until at last I found one where Mrs. Jerry and Lady Florence had stayed for two days, and every one had remarked that when they arrived the young lady was in the deepest mourning, and that two days later, when they left, she was equally well dressed, but no longer in mourning, which had seemed rather odd, and had set the boarders talking, especially one old spinster more inquisitive than the rest, or having less to occupy herself with, who had followed them and heard Mrs. Jerry ask for first class tickets for Havre at the railroad station; that was all she knew; and she felt sorry that she had not followed them. I went to Havre, thinking my task easy, for I felt sure that they had gone to America by way of Havre, and I said to myself, 'She is going to play us the same trick that she did in London, or why should she have taken the young lady from her school in Paris?' But on my arrival at Havre, though I made every inquiry in my power, I was told that no one answering the description I gave had left for America, and I was at a loss what to do further, for I had firmly believed that they intended to go back to Miss Hogg. I was beginning to be dazed, as I used to be in London and Paris. That Miss Hogg has been the only one who could make me lose my head in all my experience as a detective. What a head she has!"

"Well, to continue my story: I was walking along the pier, looking at every ship, and wondering what I had better do next, when a seafaring man in a blue guernsey accosted me, saying, 'I am the captain of that schooner, and if you are looking for a cheap passage to Southampton I 'll take you for a mere nothing.' 'But you have no accommodation for passengers,' I replied, rather astonished at

his offer. 'Well, no, not for many; still, as it is a short passage, we hardly ever go back without some one. A few months ago we had two ladies—that is to say the youngest was a lady, and of the right sort, I can tell you; no princess of the royal blood could surpass her. The older one must have been her servant, for she was called by the young lady, Nurse Mary, and she explained that she had lost her purse, or had been robbed—she could n't tell which; but what she knew was that she had not money enough to reach England by way of steamers, and if I would take them to Southampton, where she was well known, she would pay me well. I did risk it, and, strange to say, though she had told me that she had no money, when she left us she put a fiver in my hand and walked away without giving the least explanation. Now was n't that queer?' and I admitted that it was, rather, and my heart beat with joy, for I knew at once that I was on the right track again, and I took passage in this fellow's boat and questioned him on the voyage to Southampton; but he knew very little more than he had already told me, except that they had three large trunks, and had them taken to the railway station, Southampton. I went there and traced the three trunks—at least I made sure that the three trunks they told me of were the right ones, for they were addressed to Mrs. Martin, New York, *per* Cunard line, Liverpool. But I was assured that no one had gone with the trunks, so I hunted again for a clew of Mrs. Martin—as she had called herself—and her charge, for it was not the trunks I was after, but the young lady.

"Well, after hunting in every obscure hotel, and finding not even the shadow of a clew, I made up my mind to go to a hotel near the railway station, have my supper, and reflect upon what was to be my next move. I chose the Commercial Hotel, which you know is right opposite. After supper I inquired of the proprietor if he had seen any such persons as I described to him, not expecting a favorable answer, as his hotel is not a place anyone would go to to hide in; it is too public; but to my great surprise he said that he did remember having seen the parties; he had noticed the great beauty of the young lady, and that the woman could not have been her mother. They had stayed for one night only and had left for London the

next morning. I myself left for London that night, and though I hunted in every likely place for a clew I did n't find any until I arrived here this morning."

"And what clew did you find here?" asked Walgrave, who had made up his mind to keep Mathew talking as long as possible so as to give Miss Hogg time to reach the house in safety.

"Well, I have found out that they both took passage in the same steamer the three trunks had been sent to, so that the young lady has not been left in England, and it will be easy for me to trace her in America."

"Well, I suppose you are right, Mathew; but did n't you call on Bridgewell and at Scotland Yard in passing through London?"

"No, I did not; I had no positive clew, and so nothing to tell them; but I wrote to our chief this morning on my arrival here, telling him of my intention to go to America, and I will get his answer this evening. If I do I leave here to-morrow at ten a.m." And he looked hard at Walgrave and said, "Do you know that a detective's life cannot combine confidence with friendship? Now, for instance, I have as much regard for you, Mr. Walgrave, as I have for my chief; and yet, as we were walking arm in arm, do you know what came into my head as I looked at that portmanteau of yours?"

"I can't guess, as the Americans say," laughed Walgrave. "What was it? Tell us, Mathew."

"Well, it was this: that you looked more like a man who has been on a sea voyage than one who had passed a week with some friends in Liverpool, and the thought came to me like a flash, 'Is Mr. Walgrave deceiving me? Has he been to America and warned Miss Hogg of her danger? How came he to be looking at that steamer coming into port—was he in it, perchance? No, for I looked at every one who came on shore and I did not see him.'" And Mathew's eyes were bright and seemed to read Walgrave; his detective instinct was at work in the most dangerous form. He was a remarkably clever detective, always on the alert, and, as he had just said, suspecting everybody, even against his will, and he was seldom at fault.

Walgrave felt that there was danger in the air; that

he must remain calm, and above all not allow Mathew to read his mind; so he looked at him, meeting his gaze fearlessly, yet mildly, and laughed merrily as he said, "You have the detective fever bad, my friend; just reflect for one moment and tell me sincerely if you think it likely that Miss Hogg would confess to me that she had taken and is hiding the young lady, after what has passed between us; and, if I had had any intention of warning her, would not a letter have done as well, and a telegram still better? I give you my word that I have sent neither, and that I was going home when I happened to see you among the crowd; and, if I had suspected that my presence would have worked upon your nervous system as it seems to have done, I would have passed on without making myself known. Now admit that for once you are wrong."

"Well, I may be; and I believe you to be incapable of telling a deliberate falsehood; still, I wish that you would answer me a question frankly and straightforwardly."

"Certainly, my friend, if I answer at all it will be truthfully; I reserve the right of remaining silent, however, should your question be of a nature to embarrass me. Now, let's hear the question."

"Well, Mr. Walgrave, did it ever enter your head to try to save Miss Hogg from disgrace? I seem to read it in your face, though it looks so calm, and even mocking, at times, as if you were working a mine under my feet; then you, who were always so quick-tempered, and at the least word would fly into a terrible passion,—and here I have been saying that I suspect you, and you have been taking it as quietly as a baby takes its milk from the bottle; that is not your nature; to me it looks as if some one that you care for is in danger, and who can that be if not Miss Hogg, and if you lost your temper you might give me a clew? Then, what has surprised me is to hear you laugh so merrily; knowing, as you do, that I have evidence enough to convict Miss Hogg, it ought to have the contrary effect on you, for I know that you still love her. When I went down to see you at Southampton you did not laugh at the news I brought you, but you turned pale, then suddenly became bright and happy looking. You are a clever man, Mr. Walgrave, still, to a good observer you show your feelings, and I knew that you were making a plan at that time

to upset mine. If I could guess that plan I would unravel the whole mystery in less than a minute. Now, my question is, Have you been to America or have you not?" Mathew said this suddenly and looked into Walgrave's eyes, seeking his answer there rather than in Walgrave's words; but he was disappointed, for at that moment a knock came to the door and Walgrave turned round to see who it was, and thus escaped Mathew's scrutiny. That he was very uneasy under Mathew's eyes he owned to himself; his very calmness was evidence against him, and the knock at the door had been welcomed by him, though not by Mathew, who seemed to feel that he had Walgrave under the power of his strong will, and was on the point of making him betray himself; so he asked the waiter rather sharply what he wanted.

"A letter for you, sir; leastways a telegram;" and he handed Mathew a yellow envelope, which he opened, and read as follows:

"Come back at once; there is no longer any reward for Lady Florence; it has been withdrawn this past week; can't understand the matter. We wired to Lady Montgomery; she knows no more than we do; the withdrawal came from Lord Montgomery, who is in New York; we have wired to him and he has pleaded ignorance and said that he has acted upon the advice of a friend. So come back; I want you in a mysterious murder case."

Mathew's face darkened as he read, and, turning the telegram over to Walgrave, he prepared to watch him; but Walgrave was on his guard, and, opening his eyes wide as he read that Lord Montgomery was in New York, and looking at Mathew with a smile, said,"Did you know that Lord Montgomery was in America?"

"No; can't understand it."

"Well, you may depend upon it he has not gone there for nothing; perhaps he is going to play detective himself, or has made up his mind to marry Miss Hogg, and she is the friend who has advised him to withdraw the reward offered for Lady Florence. It is as clear as day to me."

"It may be to you, Mr. Walgrave, but it is not so to me; and if my time was my own I would unravel the mystery, and my belief is that you would not be far from the bottom of it."

"Well, my friend, don't let us quarrel; you will know all in good time; the most clever detectives make mistakes sometimes; you made one when you came to me with the news that you were going to hunt down the woman I loved. Now I will not discuss the subject any longer, nor will I answer any more questions."

Walgrave felt safe once more and he thought it best to admit that he had had a hand in it, for Mathew, having learned that Lord Montgomery was in New York, would naturally think that Miss Hogg must also be there arranging matters with him; so that he felt that the coast was clear for him to rejoin Miss Hogg.

"Well," said Mathew, "you and I have always worked against each other—in our hearts, at least, even when employed on the same case, and in this one we have done our best to win and each to be first. You will win, for you are free to go and act as you think fit, while I must obey; if it were not so I would give you trouble yet, for I had you in a corner a moment ago, and one little mistake on your part would have betrayed the whole plot, and I was determined that you should make that mistake," he said, his black eyes flashing angrily, though retaining his temper remarkably well under the trying circumstances, for it was hard for Mathew, who had felt himself so near success and half the reward almost within his grasp, besides the honor of having unraveled a five-year mystery.

Walgrave felt sorry for him and promised himself that he should lose nothing by it, but he remained silent under Mathew's angry looks; and when Mathew had calmed down Walgrave said, "Do you return to London to-night, Mathew? If so, we can go together."

"Yes, I must obey orders. O, if I were only free for a month I would bring this case to an end that would fill the papers and the world with wonder," and Mathew looked grand and courageous as he spoke, standing his full height, his head thrown back, his black eyes flashing with the knowledge of his power and ability. He was a handsome man, good to look upon; and he must have had great self-mastery to have kept his temper so well during this trying scene.

"Well, let 's go," said Walgrave, who thought that the sooner they left for London the better it would be for both

of them, as he himself longed to be gone to see how things had progressed with Miss Hogg.

After paying for their breakfast they walked to the railway station, each carrying his portmanteau, and very few words passing between them. They parted in London, Mathew alighting there while Walgrave continued his journey.

They had parted friends, Walgrave having pressed Mathew's hand, saying, "Good-by, Mathew, for a little while; I 'll see you again shortly; and believe me, things won't be so bad for you as they seem to-night."

And Mathew had returned the pressure, saying, "I have no ill will towards you; I ought to have known that you love her still. I 've been a fool; that 's all; so, Mr. Walgrave, good-by."

Walgrave continued his ride for some time, then changed for Cumberland, arriving there in the small hours; he went to an inn and remained there until morning, when he breakfasted and left the inn for Lady Montgomery's mansion, and on his way he called at the telegraph office, sent a telegram to Miss Hogg, calling her Russell, as we have seen; he then continued his journey to Lady Montgomery's. He sent up his card and was soon received by her ladyship, who saw at a glance that he had good news for her and said so.

"You are right," said Walgrave, "and I will not keep you in suspense, Lady Montgomery; your niece is found, but before she is returned to you I would like to discuss the matter with your ladyship and ascertain what your feelings are towards Miss Hogg, for it was she who took her away in a moment of anger, and it is she who, of her own free will, is sending her back to you. When you see Lady Florence you will see that if she had been under your own care she could not be more refined and ladylike than she is. She has been living most of the time with the Countess de Pascalina, and was visited there by Miss Hogg, to whom she has become greatly attached, as you will see for yourself when I bring her back to you, which I will do this very day. Miss Hogg has spared no expense on her education."

"Well, Mr. Walgrave, what do you wish me to do?" said Lady Montgomery, "for I see that you have a plan

and an object in coming here, and I feel that if our Florence is returned to us that it will be through your influence, so speak without fear; there are very few things that I would refuse you."

"Thank you, Lady Montgomery; my wishes are that everything should be settled without scandal, without exposing Miss Hogg to the censure of the world or of her parents, who are both unaware of what she has done; it would ruin her future life and be of no advantage to Lady Florence or to anyone else."

"I agree with you, Mr. Walgrave, in all you have said; I would rather it were done quietly, but I do not see how it can be done; her return after an absence of more than five years will have to be accounted for."

"If your ladyship will allow me to explain my plans"—

"Proceed, Mr. Walgrave, I am all attention."

"Lady Florence has been, as I have already said, under the care of the Countess de Pascalina and has passed for her niece"—

"Pardon me, Mr. Walgrave, for interrupting you, but how came the countess to become the accomplice of Miss Hogg in the abduction of my niece?"

"The countess was quite innocent in the matter, Miss Hogg having represented the young lady as being a relative of hers whom she wished to have well educated. The countess, though of noble birth, was not rich, and she accepted the care of the young lady, and not wishing any of her acquaintances to know that she was only a boarder she told Miss Hogg that she would represent her as her niece; and being well paid by Miss Hogg, the best masters and a governess were secured for her, under whom she made surprising progress. Now, my plan is, let people think that Lady Florence has really been under the care of her aunt, the Countess de Pascalina, her aunt on her father's side, he being a French count not very much known in England; and the Countess de Pascalina, his sister, believing that she had the best right to her brother's child, spirited her away from here and kept her with her until she felt herself dying, and then had given orders that the young lady should be returned to your ladyship after her death, for she is dead, the poor countess, and has no near relatives living."

"I see no objection to your plan, Mr. Walgrave; it is practicable, and will hurt no one; it will save Miss Hogg, in whom I see you are interested, from scandal; and as she has not brought up my niece in vulgar ignorance I will accept your proposal, and I wish to ask you a question: Do you know why Lord Montgomery withdrew the reward, as I have learned he has done?"

"It was I who asked him to do it to prevent the scandal I feared so much."

"Then you have seen him; has he returned from America?"

"No, Lady Montgomery, I saw him there. I have just returned from New York with the young lady and Miss Hogg."

"I understand, Mr. Walgrave, and I feel that we owe you much;" and she gave him her hand at parting as if he were an old friend, as he said, "I am going to bring home your niece and will be back here this evening. Good morning, Lady Montgomery;" and picking up his hat and cane he left the mansion well pleased with his morning's work. Taking his portmanteau as he passed the inn he soon found himself in the train for Southampton, and he reached his home at a little after two o'clock, looking very tired, but happy.

Miss Hogg had ordered a good dinner for the hour of his arrival, which was a pleasant surprise for him, and in less than a quarter of an hour he had changed his dusty clothes and appeared much the better for it. Miss Hogg could n't help thinking what a handsome man he was with his fine gray mustache and bright black eyes; any woman could love such a man. And how kind he was!

The dinner passed off gayly. He told Miss Hogg that he had been to Lady Montgomery's and that she was expecting them to return with him; that everything would go off smoothly.

Miss Hogg felt greatly relieved and said, "How considerate of you, Mr. Walgrave! I can never repay you."

"Be happy, and I will be more than repaid," he replied.

After dinner Mrs. Jerry was called in and told to dress Lady Florence in deep mourning, as she was dressed when she got her from the countess. Soon after three o'clock a carriage was driven to the gate to take them

to the station, having been ordered by Walgrave on his way home.

Mrs. Jerry felt the parting with Lady Florence very deeply, for they were not likely to meet again. Lady Florence kissed her and cried also, though she said, "Don't cry, nurse Mary, you must come and see me sometimes; you have been good to me, and I 'll tell my aunt so."

"God bless you," said the old woman. "You 're an angel!"

The carriage rolled away to the station and in due time they arrived in Cumberland, and to their great surprise saw Lady Montgomery's carriage waiting for them. The coachman knew Walgrave; he touched his hat, and, the footman opening the carriage door, they all got in and were driven away at a quick pace. Miss Hogg could not help thinking of the time when she herself had been the driver of those horses. She met Walgrave's eye and she blushed, for she knew that he also was thinking of those times. She felt ashamed and murmured, "How could I ever have done such a thing!" They passed the lodge and were soon at the mansion. The footman—the same whose ears Miss Hogg had boxed for having smiled as she left the house with her mother—opened the door for them, and she could see that he recognized her, though he tried to act as if he did not.

They were shown into the drawing-room by the housekeeper, who seemed to have been waiting for them. Turning to Mr. Walgrave, she said, "My lady's orders were that the young lady should come up to her boudoir, as she wishes to see her alone first, but that she would not keep you nor the lady waiting long." Then turning to Lady Florence, she said, "Lady Florence, I will show you the way to my lady's room." Walgrave and Miss Hogg, being left alone together, Miss Hogg remarked, "I feel very nervous; I ought not to have come. How shall I ever face the countess after the wrong I have done her?"

"My dear young lady," replied Walgrave, feeling sorry for her, "you have not done her as much wrong as you think; that she has been very anxious concerning the child cannot be denied; still she had not lived with her many months; it is not as if she had been her daughter, or as if she had been with her from babyhood; and the young

lady herself has not been wronged by you, as the Countess Montgomery must admit, for had she remained with her she could not be more accomplished and refined than she is. She has had the advantages of travel and study in different countries under the care of the late Countess de Pascalina, and mixing in the best society of different nations, which is not usual with English ladies of her age. You have been kind to her and have loved her and I see that she is attached to you; so, as far as the young lady is concerned, you have done her more good than harm."

"O, Mr. Walgrave, how good of you to speak so and to make so light of the great wrong I did years ago! You are my angel of consolation; you have saved me, given me back my peace of mind; how generous, how noble of you, after my treatment of you! How could you forgive me? For I can see that you have done so; your conduct has proved that beyond a doubt. How I wish I could see you happy once more!"

"I am happy, Miss Hogg, and to hear you speak as you have just done is balm to my sore heart. Let me see you perfectly happy yourself and I shall be content. And if you think I have helped to bring you peace and joy think sometimes of Walgrave."

Miss Hogg was greatly moved, and tears filled her fine black eyes, but she had no time to answer, for the door opened and Lady Montgomery and Lady Florence entered. The latter went straight to Miss Hogg and throwing her arms around her neck said, "Dear Mamie, my aunt is not angry; I have told her how kind you have been to me and how dearly we love each other;" and she kissed her affectionately.

"Florence is right;" said Lady Montgomery, approaching Miss Hogg with her hand extended toward her; "let the past be forgotten; let us never refer to it; let it be as a bad dream, a nightmare. You have given me back my niece more perfect than I could have made her had she remained with us." And she took Miss Hogg's hand in hers, and seating herself by her side, she continued: "Five years have made a great change in you, too, Miss Hogg; there is a softness in your eyes that I love to see there; I can see that love has touched your heart, and I hope you will be happy. My niece was telling me that you are

engaged to your cousin, and what a grand looking man he is; I am glad, my dear."

"It is good of you, Lady Montgomery, to forgive me so generously," said Miss Hogg, with emotion, "and I am pleased that you have seen a change in me for the better, for I needed it. I owe most of that happy change to my mother's people, who are not, as I was led to believe, ignorant and common, but, on the contrary, the Russells come from good old stock who emigrated to America for the sake of their religion. I have been much with them these past two years, and I have learned much from them, and, as you must have noticed, I have improved in expressing myself. I seldom use slang now, in which I used to rejoice, and believed it the right thing to do."

"I do perceive it, my dear, and I rejoice at it; though I would never have mentioned it if you had not done so first."

"I must also tell you, Lady Montgomery, that I agree with what you told me years ago and I could not understand at the time; you said, 'If you wish to be happy marry in your own sphere of life,' and I agree heartily with you. I shall be happy with my cousin Tom because we are equals; but if I had married a lord, as I wished to do years ago, for the sake of his title alone, not love, I should have ruined my own life and his too. I know now that I was not then, nor am I now, suited for a lord; I should be humiliated and slighted by his set; I should feel ashamed of my own father and his common ways, which are natural to him; I should break the hearts of my parents when they discovered that I want their money but not their company. O, how I wish that I could impress my sentiments upon all our American heiresses, and teach them that happiness is not to be found in a title; the title roses have too many thorns for American girls; however they may try to hide the fact, the thorn goes deep at times, and the pain is terrible to bear. I would rather have Tom Russell than a king."

"You speak wisely, Miss Hogg," replied her ladyship, "and I wish with all my heart that your countrywomen would see with your eyes and keep their money in their own country, instead of wasting it on old *roués* who have run through their own fortunes, and who marry the

American girls' money as the American girls marry their titles, without a thought of love. None should marry without love and out of their own sphere if they would enjoy peace and happiness. I am glad, my dear, that your marriage is for love, and if you should come to England on your wedding tour come here and spend a month or two with us. Don't refuse; you owe it to Lady Florence; she will miss you."

Turning toward Mr. Walgrave, the countess added, "And you, Mr. Walgrave, are included in the invitation."

Mr. Walgrave bowed his thanks, and Miss Hogg replied, "It is kind of you, Lady Montgomery, and I accept in my own name and in Tom's; we shall certainly pay you a visit, for I wish you to see my cousin Tom, I have good cause to be proud of him; and I owe my happiness to Mr. Walgrave as you owe the return of Lady Florence to him; he has been my best and truest friend," she said, with emotion.

"Believe me, Lady Montgomery, Miss Hogg exaggerates the service that I have been able to render her."

"I understand," said Lady Montgomery, "and I appreciate your delicacy. I am very sorry that you are no longer a detective, for I am at a loss how to repay you for all you have done for us. You have been at great expense; that must be repaid as a matter of business between friends, and by right the reward is yours."

"No, Lady Montgomery, the reward belongs to Mathew; I will have none of it; and as for my expenses we will not speak of them. I have been well repaid by the pleasure that I have experienced in seeing you all happy."

"Well, Mr. Walgrave, I shall always count you among my best friends."

"I accept your friendship, Lady Montgomery; let us call the matter settled," said Walgrave.

"And I," said Miss Hogg, "have to return to your ladyship four thousand pounds;" and she looked down and blushed.

"You have nothing to return to me, Miss Hogg; it is I who am in your debt, for what you have spent on my niece greatly exceeds the four thousand pounds, and I shall insist on repaying you as a matter of business. My niece is immensely rich and the interest of her income has

been accumulating during the past five years; and you have given her that which money can never repay—your love—which I am happy to see she returns sincerely. Don't say one word, Miss Hogg," as the latter was about to speak; "everything will be arranged to the satisfaction of every one."

"Dinner is served, my lady," said a servant at the door.

"Then let us go to dinner; we shall be by ourselves; we have no visitors to-day, and I am glad of it," said Lady Montgomery, smiling. "Miss Hogg, take Lady Florence," and, turning to Walgrave, "give me your arm, Mr. Walgrave," and she walked out of the room in the queenly manner that Miss Hogg had so much admired five years before.

Walgrave certainly proved himself to be a true gentleman and was not out of place walking by her side, and his manners at the table were unexceptionable and natural. Miss Hogg had improved greatly and very little fault could be found with her; her travels had certainly changed her for the better, and her love for her cousin had toned her down and brought a soft look into her fine black eyes. She was a finer woman at twenty-seven than she was at twenty-two.

Lady Florence was quite happy, and she said, during supper, "What a pity that Mamie and Mr. Walgrave can't stay here for good! It would be nice; don't you think so, aunty?"

"Yes, my dear, it would be nice for you, but I doubt if Miss Hogg would care to do so. What about Mr. Tom Russell, eh?" and she smiled at Miss Hogg, who blushed.

"And Mr. Walgrave also has friends whom he cannot give up to please you, my dear; but they will come and see us as often as they wish, and be always sure of a hearty welcome from us all. I am sorry that my son is not here to join his welcome with ours. Does he know that Florence is here, Mr. Walgrave?"

"Not yet, Lady Montgomery; I have left it for you to explain matters to him."

"Then I must send him a telegram immediately."

After dinner she sent a telegram to his lordship telling him to return immediately, that Lady Florence was at

home and had been with friends all the time since her disappearance.

Miss Hogg and Mr. Walgrave wished to take their departure, but Lady Montgomery would not hear of it as it was nearly eleven o'clock. "Time has passed so quickly and pleasantly for every one," she said, "you will remain here to-night; it will be pleasanter for you both to go to-morrow morning; you look very tired." She rang and gave orders to show Miss Hogg to one of the spare rooms and Mr. Walgrave to another. The latter was not sorry to remain, for he had not rested since he had met Mathew and he felt greatly exhausted.

Miss Hogg was pleased to remain one night more with Lady Florence, who, taking her to her own room, said, "You must sleep in my room to-night; I have so much to say to you."

"Yes, dear, and I shall be glad to be with you a few hours more," Mamie replied as they walked away together. Lady Florence had intended to have a long talk with Miss Hogg, but no sooner had her head touched her pillow than she fell asleep and Miss Hogg was left to her own reflections; and she did reflect, and wonder at all the events that had occurred during the five years that had elapsed since she was almost driven away from the very house in which she was now passing the night as a welcome guest. And Walgrave, on whom she had played so many tricks and whom she had so often outwitted, was under the same roof as herself and had proved to be her best friend. What a brave, noble-minded man he was and how basely she had acted towards him! Her treatment of him weighed heavily on her mind; everything else that she had done to others had been repaired, and no one would feel the ill results of her actions—no one but Walgrave. All the past had been washed away, so to speak, and a bright future was opening for each one who had been mixed up in her misdeeds, even herself, who so little deserved it. Only Walgrave had been crushed and his future life had been blighted by her; and she owed him her present peace of mind and future happiness; and he not only forgave her, but asked her as a favor to himself to be happy, and he would feel well repaid for whatever he had been able to do for her. O, his love was indeed true

love! To give her up to another and ask her to be happy with that other; she could not have done what he was doing. "And to think that I have wrecked that noble-hearted man's life and that all my repentance will avail him nothing! O, the thought of it will be a thorn in my happiness! If I could only see Walgrave happy once more I would give much, but I would never dare offer him money; it would do with many, but not with him;" and she fell asleep, her eyes wet with tears. She had a great deal to be thankful for, still, her happiness was not complete; her misdeeds faced her; they could not all be repaired. And so it is with many of us who have done wrong; there are things that cannot be undone; that will leave a shadow on our lives and poison our peace of mind unless we have become so hardened in sin that our conscience is dead to every good feeling and has ceased to trouble us till death stares us in the face; and I hope none of my readers have reached this point of iniquity.

The next day the sun rose brightly; not a cloud could be seen to spoil its beauty. Miss Hogg looked at it as she said her prayers by the window, and murmured, "O, if my horizon could be as clear! May God in his mercy send peace and joy to poor Walgrave's heart," was her sincere prayer.

Lady Florence awoke, and, seeing Miss Hogg on her knees, jumped out of bed and knelt by her side, for she was a Catholic, like Mamie; her father was a Frenchman and a good Catholic, and the Countess de Pascalina had been a Catholic; she said, "Let us pray together; it may be long before we can do it again;" and Miss Hogg, throwing her arms around Lady Florence's neck, they both prayed for each other's welfare; then they kissed one another with tears in their eyes, for they would have to part that day. Lady Florence was about to ring for her maid, but Miss Hogg said, "No, dear, don't ring; I am going to help you to dress;" and she did so with loving hands, curling and combing her beautiful hair, and thinking of the night when she and Katy had cut it short. Then they went down and saw Walgrave in the garden, where they joined him; he looked calm and peaceful as he wished them good morning. Miss Hogg told him that it was her intention to go straight to London on leaving there, and

that he could send Mrs. Jerry to her on his return home; but she added, as she saw the smile leave Walgrave's face, "I must see you again before I leave England. Will you come to London and see me off, or would you prefer to have me call at your house? You are aware that I care very little for etiquette."

"Miss Hogg," replied Walgrave, "you will always be welcome at my home, but I intend to go to London; I must settle matters with Mathew."

"Poor Mathew," said Miss Hogg, laughing merrily at past recollections; and Walgrave, to her great delight, joined in; she had n't heard him laugh so heartily since their meeting after years.

"Then," continued Walgrave, "I shall have to see what can be done with that lawyer; I am afraid he will give us trouble; still, do not feel any anxiety concerning him; leave him to me, Miss Hogg."

"Thank you, Mr. Walgrave; and as the fellow will require money to shut his mouth I will give you a check before I leave here."

"Time enough when I see you in London, Miss Hogg. I hear the breakfast bell, so I suppose we had better go in. Where is Lady Florence gone? O, here she is with her hat full of flowers."

Lady Florence came up, saying, "The gardener has cut these flowers for me; I 'm going to make a buttonhole bouquet for Mr. Walgrave and pin it on his coat myself; and you, Mamie, shall have a large bouquet to take with you to London."

They then returned to the house, where they met the Countess Montgomery, who kissed her niece affectionately, and gave her hand to Walgrave and Miss Hogg, as she wished them good morning.

After breakfast Walgrave left for his home, being taken to the station in Lady Montgomery's carriage. As for Miss Hogg, she was persuaded to remain another day. Then she left for London, taking with her the best wishes of Lady Montgomery and Lady Florence for her happiness.

Mrs. Jerry was already in London waiting for her. Miss Hogg occupied herself giving orders for her trousseau, and the best dressmakers were employed to make the

wedding dress, which was to be of ivory satin, and the finest point lace. She was really growing very tired of trying on dresses, and would be glad when it was over and her trousseau completed.

One afternoon she was trying on her wedding dress for the last time when the servant brought her a card. She read "Henry Walgrave," and, in pencil, "Can I see you for a few minutes? It is a matter of importance." It gave Miss Hogg a shock that Walgrave should happen to call on her when she was dressed as a bride. She sent word that she would be down in a few minutes, and ordering the dressmakers to take off all her finery as quickly as possible—she would not have had Walgrave see her in her wedding dress, or even have him know what she was doing when he sent up his card,—she hurried down as soon as possible, still, it had taken more than half an hour; and as she entered the room to which Walgrave had been shown she saw that something had happened to make him look so anxious and excited as he did, and she could see that it was a personal matter with which she had very little to do.

"I 'm afraid, Miss Hogg, that I 'm disturbing you," he hastened to say, as she held out her hand to him, "but the fact is I could not wait; it is of the greatest importance that I should learn the facts as soon as possible, and I think that you can help me, or your mother could if she were here."

"Never think for a moment, Mr. Walgrave, that you can disturb me, and I am sorry that I have made you wait so long; and though I don't know what you mean, be assured that I will do anything in my power for you with the greatest pleasure. You spoke of my mother; if it is anything you wish to know about her I can enlighten you as well as she could; dear mamma has no secrets from me; she is the best woman in the world."

"Thank you, Miss Hogg; but I 'm afraid that I am going to take up much of your time, for I have much to tell you and to ask you."

"My time is yours; a whole week, if you wish it. Sit down, Mr. Walgrave, and don't hurry on my account; take your time and tell me how I can help you;" and seating herself in an easy chair facing Walgrave, she prepared

to listen attentively to what he seemed so anxious for her to know. She saw that he was paler than usual, and yet there was a light in his eyes that she had never seen there before; it was hope and joy combined, and yet a certain fear and uneasiness that, cute as she was at reading faces, baffled her for once; so she waited with some anxiety to hear what he could have to tell that affected him so deeply.

CHAPTER LXII.

After leaving Miss Hogg at Lady Montgomery's Walgrave arrived safely at his home, and after dinner told Mrs. Jerry that she was to go to London and join her mistress there. His housekeeper was out at the time, and only came back as Mrs. Jerry was leaving the house, the cabman having already the trunks on top of his cab. The two old women bade each other good-by and the cab was soon out of sight. Old Mrs. Grant, seeing her master on the step, hurried up to him, saying,"I 'm so glad you 've come back, sir; old Nancy Gray has been here twice and she seemed so anxious to see you; she would n't tell me what she wanted. She said she had n't come to beg; that was all I could get out of her; she told me that she would call again in the evening, sir, and to be sure and let you know."

"Well, Mrs. Grant, I can't imagine what she can want with me; perhaps old James Gray has got himself into trouble; I 'll go down and see." He put on his hat and walked away, followed by Carlo, who was rejoiced at having his master back again, and barked at him, jumped at him, and showed his pleasure in every imaginable way; ran ahead, then rushed back again, pulling him by the hand; then ran to the beach, where he thought his master was going.

When Walgrave reached old Gray's cabin he knocked and walked in. The two old people were there. Nancy gave a scream as she saw him and seemed on the point of fainting again, and the old man's hands trembled as he set a chair for Mr. Walgrave, who looked at them both in great astonishment, for his presence did not usually bring a look of fear to their old faces.

"What has happened, Gray? You both look as if I had come to arrest you, instead of giving you a helping hand, as I am ready to do if it is in my power."

"O, that 's too much," cried old Nancy. "When you know all you won't say that much. O, Mr. Walgrave,

we have both done you a great wrong and we 'll be hanged for it."

"Yes, yes," said the old man, "be hanged, nothing less, for every one will say that we murdered them both; who is there to say we did n't? And yet Mr. Walgrave must be told, he has been so good to us."

"Look here, my good people," said Walgrave, sternly, "you are laboring under some mistake; it has never been in your power to injure me in any way, so let me hear at once what you have to say."

"O, Mr. Walgrave, we only found it out the night before last; yet we never knew that we had done the wrong, and we had no idea that it was to you that it had been done," said Nancy.

Of course Nancy and her husband used many slang words and low English that it is not my intention to write here; I think it often puzzles the reader; it has puzzled me often in reading books; so much so that I was quite unable to understand what I was reading.

"Well," said Walgrave, "let me hear it, and I shall be able to judge for myself if you have wronged me."

He could not understand them; he felt no uneasiness, and what was coming upon him like a thunderbolt was very far from his mind; but at the first word he turned deadly pale.

"Tell him, Nancy, I can't do it," said old Gray, hiding his face in his hands.

"Then I must," said Nancy; "we are sure to be hanged anyway;" and looking, not at Walgrave, but at the floor, she began: "Do you remember about thirteen years ago when the Jersey packet was wrecked on the Needles?"

Walgrave's heart stood still and he felt himself growing pale. What were they about to reveal? Something terrible, but what could it be? He said not a word, but waited, holding his breath, never answering Nancy's question; but she went on: "Yes, it is even more than thirteen years ago. Well, it was so foggy that nothing could be seen even six feet away. My old man had gone fishing with his partner that morning; there was no fog when they left here, but it came on about an hour after they had gone. I was uneasy, and often looked toward the beach to see if they had not put back, but I could see nothing

of the boat. I heard cannon shots as if a ship was in distress."

Walgrave's face grew paler and paler, and the cold perspiration rolled down his face. He seemed to be on board that steamer in distress once more and the horrible scene passed anew in his mind like a panorama; he saw his young wife go down; his anguish was terrible to witness, but not a word escaped him. What were they going to tell him? For what purpose were they reopening his wounds and making them bleed afresh?

Nancy never looked up, but went on: "I heard guns at intervals, and some answering on shore; then some steamers whistling here and there in the fog, then all was still. I stood in the doorway all the time, though I could see nothing. At last I heard a footstep coming nearer and nearer, and I called out, 'Is that you, James?' 'Yes, Nancy.' Then I saw him coming alone but carrying something in his arms, and I went to him, saying, 'What have you there, is it Jim, is he drowned?' 'Yes,' said he, 'Jim, my partner, is drowned, but this is not him I have here; let me in.' He went in and laid down on the floor the bundle that he carried, and, opening an old sail, he discovered to my eyes the body of a beautiful young girl with yellow hair."

"Stop!" shrieked Walgrave, jumping to his feet; "my wife, O, my God, my Isabelle; and I never was told of it! Speak, woman, what did you do with my wife's body?"

"O, Mr. Walgrave, we did n't know she was your wife; but I have worse to tell you yet."

"Was she alive? Did you murder her?" he asked with a voice choked with anguish.

"No, no, we did n't murder her," groaned the old man.

"No," said Nancy, "but she was alive."

"Alive! alive!" repeated Walgrave, "and where is she now? Tell me, does she still live?"

"No, no, Mr. Walgrave, she died before morning; do let me tell you."

Walgrave sat down again looking ready to drop. For a moment the mad thought had entered his head that his wife was still living; if his brain had been clear he would

have seen the impossibility of her being alive for thirteen years without his knowledge.

"Yes, she was alive," said the old woman; "we discovered that after working three hours to revive her; she had beautiful clothes on, but they were wet, so I sent my old man out and I undressed her and putting on her some of my old clothes—an old patched nightgown and a nightcap which hid her yellow hair,—I got her in our bed, and I did not expect her to live an hour, for she never recovered consciousness, but only moaned as if in great pain. We had found a purse in her pocket containing twenty golden sovereigns and a few shillings. We two had never seen so much money in all our lives before; still, I must say that we had no intention of keeping the money; if the lady lived she would get it all back, but she was not likely to live, and we thought it best to say nothing about the money to anyone when the lady was dead. We also found on her a beautiful gold watch and chain; we have it yet, as we did not dare to sell it as it had initials on the inside. She had also beautiful rings on her fingers, one was a wedding ring; we have that also for the same reason as the watch. The other rings had precious stones in them; we sold them later on."

"Never mind the rings," said Walgrave, lifting up his pale face, and looking at the old woman; "what did you do with my dear wife's body? Tell me. Surely you did not put it back into the sea?"

"No, no, Mr. Walgrave, we did not; but I have something more to confess to you. In trying to bring her back to life I made a discovery; she was soon to become a mother."

Walgrave groaned bitterly. The sufferings that he was enduring were worse than death to him. O, why revive all those terrible times, since she was dead? Why not tell him simply that she had died and where they had buried her; but no, old Nancy would tell him all the harrowing circumstances as if she were taking pleasure in his sufferings. Yet this was not the case. Old Nancy seemed to be passing through the scenes of thirteen years ago; in her mind she saw the lady as she was then, and everything that she herself had done was visibly recalled as if it had only just occurred. Had she looked up at Walgrave and seen

his pale face working with the anguish that he was passing through she would have come back to the present time; but her eyes had not been removed from the floor and her mind was entirely on the dreadful scenes of thirteen years ago; and she continued:

"When I made that discovery the devil tempted me and showed me a way by which we could keep all that we had found on this lady and risk no discovery. I told my old man and he agreed with me."

"I did, I did," moaned the old man; "you tempted me as Eve did Adam; woe is me, I shall never know peace again!"

"Well," continued Nancy, without replying to her husband, "when we had agreed what tale to tell about this young lady I sent James for the doctor, and while he was gone I hid the clothes all wet as they were, and taking all her rings from her fingers, even her wedding ring, I hid her face as much as possible with my frilled nightcap, and smeared her face so that she would not look over clean. I made her lose the appearance of a lady by all the rags I put around her. Then I waited for the doctor, not without anxiety, for if he should discover the trick that we were playing him we would soon find ourselves in jail, for he was not the man to help in any fraud if he knew it; but we had a pretty good name and were looked upon by most people as being honest folks, though poor, for somehow we could never save. Well, when the doctor examined the lady he turned to me and said, 'What is the meaning of this?' I thought he had discovered all; but no; and he continued, 'This young woman looks to me as if she had been under water for some time; how is it?' I began to snivel, with my apron to my eyes, and said: 'It is my fault, doctor; she is our daughter, who left us two years ago and went wrong. She came to me this morning in that thick fog. I was alone, James having gone fishing with his partner. I heard a knock at the door and wondered who it could be. I opened the door and saw my daughter Mary standing there, and, seeing how matters were, I said, "Get out of my sight, you tramp! have you come to disgrace us in our old age?" She fell on her knees and cried out,"O, mother, take me in, do, and I 'll reform." But I was furious at the disgrace she was putting on us

and I drove her from my door and locked myself in. In about half an hour I heard James calling to me to open the door; I did so, and there he stood holding Mary in his arms all wet, and looking like a corpse, and I gave a scream as I said, "I drove her to it." "No more than I did," said James; "I met her on the beach and she had the cheek to ask me to take her back in our home; I told her to make herself scarce or I would knock her brains out with the boat hook; and turning away from me she leaped into the sea from the small wharf where I generally fastened my boat; Jim leaped after her to try to save her and he was carried out to sea by the current. I untied the boat and tried to save them; my heart softened toward my poor misguided girl; I made a grab at her clothes with the boat hook, and after several misses I succeeded in dragging her into the boat. Then I looked for Jim, but saw nothing of him, the fog being so thick. I called but received no answer. Then I turned the boat towards the shore, and taking Mary in my arms I have brought her to you, but I believe she is a corpse."

"'That is what James said to me, doctor, and I put my girl to bed and sent for you. I have done all I could in the meantime, but though she 's not dead I can't make her come to; perhaps you can.' But he shook his head, for he had been trying all the time I was talking, and he said, 'There 's no hope, and it may be as well for you that it is so; still, her disgrace will be known; it can't be hidden. I 'll do all in my power to save her; if she 's to be saved I 'll do it, but she 's too far gone, I 'm afraid.' He stayed with her all the afternoon and part of the following night, but toward morning she passed away."

Walgrave's sobs could be heard—sobs that shook him from head to foot; but not a word did he utter.

"Yes," said the old woman, "she had passed away, leaving us with a tiny baby girl."

and where is it—did it die? Don't tell me that, woman,

"What!" said Walgrave, leaping to his feet; "a child, if you don't want to see me drop dead at your feet, and be the cause of my death as you have probably been the cause of that of my wife and child. Answer me, did she live?"

"She did live, and may yet be alive for aught we know. Let me tell you all, sir."

Walgrave sat down again, but he had a terrible look in his eyes as he fixed them on old Nancy.

"The doctor gave us a certificate of death for our daughter, as he thought, and we had her buried in the little churchyard yonder, I 'll show you the grave whenever you wish; and as for the baby, we kept it for three weeks, and then made up our minds that it would n't pay to keep it, and that it would be a great trouble to me; so we agreed to send the baby to the poorhouse, where she could have better care than we could give her, but we did not wish every one to know it; so one day I met the doctor, and I told him that the party who had led our girl astray, having somehow heard how she had died, felt sorry for his share in the sad event, was willing to take charge of the baby and had sent us two sovereigns for my expenses to London, for he wished me to take the child there to him as he did n't want to be known about here; and I showed the gold to the doctor, so that he believed me, and advised me to go, as it would be better for us and the child, he said. He never said anything more about the child and it 's all forgotten now."

"But where did you leave my child?" said Walgrave; "Why not tell me at once? Don't keep me in suspense; you are driving me mad."

"O, I left for London, taking the child with me, having wrapped around her a piece of her mother's chemise that I tore off with the name of Isabelle de Courtney."

"O, there 's no doubt; that was her name. My own dear wife, had I been near you you might have lived. But go on; what did you do next?"

"I wrapped her up, as I have said, in the piece with the name, and a petticoat with the same name on the waistband; then I covered her all over with an old black shawl, and taking the rings and some money, I left for London. On arriving at Waterloo Station I got into an omnibus and crossed the bridge. I hardly knew where to go for I had never been in London before. I got down from the 'bus a little way past the bridge on the west side, I was told it was, and I walked about till I saw a small coffee shop, which I entered, had something to eat, and gave the baby some warm milk; then, as it was getting dark, I left the coffee shop and after walking for half an hour I found

myself by the bridge again. I had been going back to where I came from instead of into the town. I turned my back to the bridge and walked up the street facing me for some time, then I turned to my right and walked what seemed to me a great way, for I was getting tired. All the lamps were lighted and I was getting very puzzled. I saw what looked to me a small garden railed up on my left; I had a mind to leave the baby there as I dared not ask the way to a poorhouse; but just then a policeman passed me, and I fancied he looked hard at me, and if I left the baby there he would know me again and I would get into trouble; so I walked on and soon arrived at a large church on my right, and on my left was a private hotel—I am sure of that—and the street was rather dark, having no shops; only the gaslight in the street. I looked about, there was no one passing, so I put the baby just inside the rails of the church so that it would not get hurt by pedestrians, but could be seen and heard as soon as it began to cry. I then turned the corner on my right above the church, and seeing an omnibus for London Bridge, I hailed it, and having passed the bridge I got down and looked for a shop with three balls, as James had told me to do. I soon saw two or three of them, and going into a shop I offered the two rings for sale. The man was a Jew; he looked at the rings, then at me, saying, "How much do you want for the two?' and as I did n't know the value I said, 'What do you think they are worth to you?' He said, 'They are worth five pounds to me and nothing to you,' grinning in my face as he said so. I was no great judge of precious stones, still I expected him to say 'twenty pounds,' and I told him so. He glared at me and said, 'Take the five pounds and think yourself lucky that I don't send for a policeman.' I took the money, left him the rings and hurried away. I passed the night at a coffee shop and came back here the next day. That 's all I have to say. I have never heard who found the child to this day."

Going to an old trunk, she took from it an old tin box, saying, "You will find in here the watch and chain and wedding ring."

Walgrave took it, and putting it mechanically into his pocket, rose to go; but before going, he turned to old

James Gray, and asked, "Where did you pick up my wife?" His voice sounded strange even to himself.

The old man answered without looking up, "It was too foggy for us to fish, so we turned back and tried to find our way home, but we were a good distance away. In passing one of the currents we saw the body of a woman, and as Jim could swim he jumped after her while I turned the boat to pull them in. He had the woman in one arm while he held fast to the side of the boat with his other hand. I took the woman from him and got her in my boat with much difficulty, and, having done so, I laid her on a sail; I then turned back to look for Jim, who had, I thought, got into the boat by himself, but no Jim was there. I looked in the water, as far as I could see in the fog, but I saw nothing of him; I called at the top of my voice, but no answer came. I sailed about for a while, but I have never set eyes on him again to this day. The current must have carried him to sea, poor fellow! He had died trying to save a life. That 's all true, Mr. Walgrave, and just as it happened, and I can't tell you how sorry we were when we found out the night before last that you were the husband of the lady who died here."

"Who told you, how did you find it out?"

"An old chum of mine came to see us. He used to be vestry clerk in London, and in speaking of my boat—the one you gave me, sir,—your name was mentioned, and he told us that he had seen you get married, that your wife was fair and her name was Isabelle de Courtney. It gave us a turn. Nancy fainted away. O, if we had only kept the baby!"

"Don't say any more about it just now, Gray; I can't stand it. I 'm crushed; I must think what is to be done;" and he left the cottage. His dog ran joyfully to meet him as he was in the habit of doing, but as he looked into his master's face he seemed to know that something was wrong, and he licked his hand and walked quietly by his side.

Poor Walgrave! He must have been born for sorrow, for it met him at every turn; there seemed to be no joy, no peace, for him, in this world. No pen can picture his anguish as he walked back to his home, where he shut himself up in his study, with orders that he was not to be

disturbed. He looked so ill as he came in that the housekeeper asked him if she should go for the doctor.

"No, I want rest; that 's all;" had been his answer.

Walgrave was a man with a great deal of heart and fine feeling; and the sorrow which he had believed buried for years, and which time had softened, facing him again when he least expected it, had been a terrible shock to his sensitive feelings. He had a daughter somewhere in the world, but where was he to look for her? Nancy had left her where any passer-by might take her if so disposed. Would he ever find out who had her, and would they be the people that he would have chosen to bring up his child, and what kind of a girl would she be? Hope and fear, together with the shock of surprise, nearly unsettled his reason. Then the death of his dear wife in Gray's cabin. O, if he could only have been there at the time, she might have lived, and the thought of what might have been overwhelmed him, and he sobbed aloud, with his head on his desk; then he sat back in his chair; he had passed through so much that day that his feelings became blunted; he felt dazed; the pain at his heart left him; he hardly knew where he was; he had lost the power of thought, and he sat with his head thrown back, his eyes open, looking straight before him, feeling no pain. It was well for him that this numbness had possessed him, for it gave a much needed rest to both body and mind. How long he remained in this condition he never knew. His housekeeper, becoming alarmed at his silence and long stay, knocked, and opening the door, said, "Shall I bring lights, sir?"

"No, Mrs. Grant, I don't feel well, and I 'm going to bed."

"But you will have supper, sir, before you retire?"

"No; bring me a glass of wine and a biscuit;" and having eaten the biscuit and drunk the wine, he went to bed like one in a dream, and, strange to say, slept till morning, and awoke with all his faculties in full play and a great pain at his heart, but he was calm and ready for work once more; and he murmured, "I have been very near losing my reason; but that numbness and the blessed sleep saved me. O, my own dear Isabelle!" And as he pronounced that dear name the thought of another Isabelle rushed into his brain. "O, my God, if it could only be so,

how thankful I would be!" And the more he thought the more positive he became. "Mrs. Hogg told me that her name was Isabelle de Courtney, and the resemblance which I noticed as soon as my eyes fell on her! She is the image of my dead wife. O, if I had only known all this before! Mrs. Hogg promised to tell me all about her, so that there must be a secret. I wonder if Miss Hogg knows it."

He made up his mind to go to London in a few days. He must see his wife's grave first, and rest for a day or two, for he felt shattered; he had gone through so much lately he could not bear much more. He knew how trying it would be to him to see his dear wife's grave. He must have a monument erected to her memory.

After eating a light breakfast he left the house alone, leaving his dog behind, to the great surprise of Mrs. Grant, who asked him if he would be home for dinner.

"Yes, I am sure to be back by that time," and he walked toward the Grays' cottage.

Mrs. Grant looked after her master and wondered what could have happened at the Grays to make Mr. Walgrave so ill, for he seemed hardly able to walk; and yet he was going there again. Yes, Walgrave called at the cabin and asked James Gray to go with him to the churchyard. We shall not follow him there, for it would be too harrowing for my readers, who have already passed through so many sad scenes with our friend Walgrave. Suffice it to say that when he returned home he was hardly able to stand and after drinking a cup of strong coffee he retired to his room and did not leave for London until a week later, and having left his portmanteau at a hotel he went to call on Miss Hogg, as we have recorded, looking pale and excited, as Miss Hogg had remarked. He told her all that had occurred since they had parted. Miss Hogg's astonishment was great and she expressed her heartfelt sympathy for him, and informed him that Isabelle was without a doubt his daughter, as she herself had the piece of what she had supposed was a nightdress, with the name written quite plain in India ink—"Isabelle de Courtney"; she also had the skirt and the black shawl. She told him where she had got the child, and it agreed with what Nancy had told him, and the church where she had left the child must be St. Pancras Church; and what she had

supposed to be a garden—and in reality was one—was in Russell Square, belonging to the occupants of the houses in the square; and the resemblance of Isabelle to his late wife, all combined to prove that she was his daughter. Miss Hogg was overjoyed at the thought that it was in her power to throw a little sunshine in Walgrave's pathway, and she exclaimed, "O, Mr. Walgrave, I feel so thankful that I can give you such a good and lovely daughter! she will make you happy; but, Mr. Walgrave, you must not take her entirely away from us. You have no one here in England for whom you care very much; you have been leading a lonely life; it would be dull for Isabelle to have no young people around her. I have a proposition to make you, and if you have any regard for me and don't wish to make me very miserable, you will not refuse; your acceptance will bring joy into my heart and peace into my future life. Now, my plan is this—and you know that I am good at making plans," she said, smilingly: "I want to see you happy, Mr. Walgrave, and in time you are going to be so. Now, I want you to settle all your business here in England and come back with me to America to stay. You know the farm where you came to see me: well, that is going to be yours; you will live there with your daughter. How nice it sounds! Then, when you require a change you will come to see us in Brooklyn with dear Isabelle."

"But, Miss Hogg, that farm has cost you a great deal of money," said Walgrave, much affected by Miss Hogg's generosity, and, understanding her motive for offering it, he feared to refuse and give her pain; but she settled him in a moment by saying, "It cost four thousand pounds, and you know that Lady Montgomery has refused to take back the four thousand pounds I received from her. Now I never used that money, but I had it invested in Isabelle's name, meaning to give it to her as a dower. I will make an exchange and have the farm transferred to you, and I will keep the four thousand pounds, so that you will owe me nothing; it all comes from Lady Montgomery, and you have done a great deal for her, more than she can ever repay you; so don't say another word; I won't listen to any objections now it is all settled."

"O, Miss Hogg, how cleverly you put it; but I will remind you of what Lady Montgomery told you: you have

spent much more than that amount for Lady Florence's education, so that it is to you that I would owe this generous gift and not to Lady Montgomery."

"Now, Mr. Walgrave, accept it to please me, to add to my happiness;" and she rose and held out her hands to him.

He rose also, and taking her hands in his, said, "I will, Miss Hogg; you are a noble woman; I will not pain you by a refusal; I thank God that my child fell into your hands, and I will not take her away from you and your kind mother, who loves her so. I will go to America, as you propose;" and, kissing her hands, he released them and led her back to her chair.

"I have many things to settle before leaving here," said he, "and it is more than likely that you will be ready to return to America before I am, but I will follow as soon as I have set everything to rights here."

"We shall see, Mr. Walgrave; I would certainly prefer to have you come back with me, even if I have to delay my departure for a week."

"You are very kind, Miss Hogg, and I will hasten my departure as much as possible. I will not detain you any longer now;" and he rose to go.

"Yes, do so," replied Miss Hogg; "and if I can help you in any way don't hesitate to ask me. I had better give you a check for that lawyer. How much do you think he will want? What a fool I was to put myself in his power!"

"That was the only mistake you made, Miss Hogg," said Walgrave with the shadow of a smile; "but I will see what can be done with him. I don't propose to bribe him; he would come back too often upon you and keep you in perpetual fear of extortions. Should I not be able to manage him without money I will let you know, so good-by for the present."

When Walgrave left Miss Hogg he was feeling much relieved and happier than before his call; his mind was at rest regarding his daughter Isabelle. How strange it seemed to him to have a daughter, and how his heart went out to her! How lovely she was, and what would she say when she knew that he was her father? Would she love him? He had seen so little of her at the farm; his anxiety

had been all for Miss Hogg and for Lady Florence, who had learned to care for him enough to wish to keep him in her aunt's home and had pinned a bouquet in his buttonhole, so surely his own daughter would learn to love him in time.

All these things came to him as he went on his way to Lady Montgomery's lawyers to arrange matters with them concerning the reward, Lady Montgomery having left everything in Mr. Walgrave's hands. He had no trouble in getting the one thousand pounds promised; he received it in two checks, one for eight hundred and the other for two hundred pounds. Then he ordered his cabman to drive to Scotland Yard, and there he asked to see the chief of police. He was shown into his private office, but it was no longer the same chief as in Walgrave's time, at which he felt relieved, for no embarrassing questions would be put to him, and he was not in a frame of mind to discuss his private affairs, even with his old chief. He stated his business in a few words; he had called in Lady Montgomery's name to say that Lady Florence had returned to her aunt, and that she had been with some relatives of her late father during the past five years, and at their death she had been sent back; those relatives had believed that they had the best right to her.

"And what is the name of those relatives?" asked the captain, suspiciously, as he looked hard at Walgrave.

"The Countess de Pascalina," he replied.

"O, ah, I saw the announcement of her death in the papers; it occurred in Italy, did it not?"

"It did, captain; and Lady Montgomery wishes me to say that whatever expenses you have incurred in this business will be settled by her lawyers; you know them."

"Certainly; we have often drawn upon them during the past five and a half years."

"I also wish to know where I can find Mathew, the detective who has been employed on this case."

"But there is no reward; at least we were told so."

"You have been correctly informed, captain. As soon as the news came that Lady Florence had been with the Countess de Pascalina the search was ordered to be stopped and consequently the reward was withdrawn; still, Lady

Montgomery feels that Mr. Mathew deserves an acknowledgment for his services, and she has commissioned me to see him and arrange matters with him, which I hope will prove to his satisfaction; if you will kindly give me his address, or tell me where I am most likely to find him, you will oblige me. He told me when I saw him last that he was going on a murder case. You could not have a better man than Mathew. I believe he is the best you ever had."

"He is certainly the best we have now," replied the chief of police, "but I was told that some years ago we had his master, though I have never seen him myself; it was before my time. His name was Walgrave. By the way, was he a relative of yours? for now I remember the clerk announced you as Mr. Walgrave."

"I am the Walgrave you alluded to," replied our friend, "but my capacities have been great exaggerated. Mathew is, and always was, a match for me."

"You are modest, Mr. Walgrave, but there are deeds of yours recorded here," placing his hand on a large book on the table, "that tell a different tale; but I shall say no more; I understand you; all I can say is that I 'm sorry you 're not one of us now;" and the captain held out his hand to Walgrave, who thanked him for his good opinion of him. "Now," said the chief, "since you wish to see Mathew I think you had better stay here; I expect him in less than an hour; then you will be sure of him."

Going to a cupboard, he brought out a bottle of wine and glasses, and a silver basket of biscuits; and when Mathew came in at the appointed time it gave him a surprise to see Walgrave and his chief talking like old friends over their wine. "Ah, Mathew," said the captain, "you don't know how pleased I am to have made the acquaintance of the famous Walgrave of whom I had heard and read so much; and he is a friend of yours, he tells me."

"Yes, captain, and a rival; he always checkmated me; still, I am proud to be claimed by him as a friend."

"Well, hurry with your report and you can spend the evening with him."

Mathew did so, and Walgrave, making now and then a suggestion which astonished the chief, proved to be a

great help in the case, and as the chief shook hands with him he said, "I must say once more that I sincerely regret that you are not one of us, Mr. Walgrave."

"And I say," replied Walgrave, smiling, "that the flower of your flock is here;" and he placed his hand on Mathew's shoulder, and passing his arm through his, they both left the office.

"Now," said Walgrave, "you are coming to my hotel; I have much to say to you, first as a friend, and next as a detective."

"I am at your service in both capacities as far as it lies in my power to be," replied Mathew. "How do you like our new chief? You never saw him before, did you?"

"No, Mathew; and he appears to me to be a good natured and good tempered fellow."

"He 's all that and cute besides. Our old chief retired on a pension two years ago. Had you stayed in the place you would have had his post, Mr. Walgrave."

"Well, Mathew, it 's better as it is; I have gone through so much in my life that I am unfit for hard work. I have had another terrible shock lately."

"I thought you looked ill and thinner than when I saw you last."

"Yes, Mathew, and that beautiful, fair little girl that mystified us so often, has proved to be—what do you think?"

"O, a princess, perhaps; she was lovely enough to be one."

"No, Mathew, but my daughter."

"Now look here, Mr. Walgrave, don't allow that she-devil, Miss Hogg—I beg your pardon for speaking so of her, but I can't help it—you have allowed yourself to be caught in her meshes, and you don't know what trick she is going to play on you; she is clever enough to make a man lose his own identity. How did she manage to make you believe such an impossible thing? You told me that your wife was drowned many years ago and had left no children or child. I 'm glad that I 've met you for I 'm going to disabuse your mind. I know how you feel. She used to puzzle me so that my head beat like a drum, and if I had seen as much of her as you have she would have driven me mad. I understand why you want me as a

detective; it is to fathom this mystery, and I'll do it, my friend. Why did you interfere with me when I had her in the hollow of my hand? I knew you'd be sorry for it before long. She'll be the death of you yet if I don't run her down, and whatever you say I'm going to do it and save you from her."

"Come, my friend," said Walgrave, "I think it is you who are getting excited; you, generally so cool; and I know that I'm going to shock you when I tell you that Miss Hogg is a noble woman and that I am going back to America with her."

Mathew threw himself back in his chair dumfounded. Had Walgrave lost his reason?

"But," continued Walgrave, "let us speak of yourself first; and to show you that I am not mad, as I can see you think me, I will own to you, my friend, that if I had not helped Miss Hogg to escape, you would have had her; she was in the ship that you were watching, and so was I; and yet you did n't see me come ashore. I kept you talking at your hotel to give her time to escape. She had Lady Florence with her; like a good bloodhound, you guessed that everything was not right with me. Your eyes seemed to read right through me. I kept my temper, and you told me that it was a bad sign; that it was fear that made me do it, and your chief said that I was a better detective than you. No, Mathew, you are a better detective than I, and I'm not ashamed to own it; and yet I feel that I am a good detective, though second to you. Now, Mathew, I was the cause of your losing half of that reward, for it was I who advised Lord Montgomery to withdraw it, not so much on your account as for that lawyer of whom we will speak presently. I also knew that at Scotland Yard they would call you back and that you would have to obey; I feared you, my friend, and I own it; but it has never been my intention that you should lose by the trick I played you, and here is the proof of what I say."

He drew from his pocket the check for eight hundred pounds and placed it on the table before Mathew, who was greatly astonished, and he said, "You have more right to it than I have, for you were the winner; everything you

did was fair; I would have done the same to outwit you had it been in my power."

"No, Mathew, all this is yours; what I did was for love, not money; but I repeat, if you had not come to me in Southampton and told me that you were going to hunt down the woman I loved you would have been the winner and things would not have turned out half as well for all parties as they are likely to do. Now do you still think that I am losing my reason?"

"Not on these points, Mr. Walgrave, and you are not only the most clever man I ever met, but the most honorable and generous. I feel mean in accepting this large sum of money, and would prefer to share it with you."

"I believe you, Mathew; but when I have explained matters to you and proved beyond a doubt that Isabelle is my daughter, and what my future prospects are, you will feel willing to keep the eight hundred pounds, which really belong to you. Now listen."

And Walgrave related all that had occurred from the time he had parted from Mathew at his own garden gate in Southampton. When he came to the part where the Grays had made him acquainted with the sad death of his wife, he became almost overpowered with his own grief. Mathew felt deeply for him, and his own eyes were full of tears. But when everything was made clear concerning the child, he rejoiced, for he saw that this great shock had done Walgrave more good than harm. The vivid picture of his wife dying in the cabin of the Grays renewed his sorrow for his great loss, his early love had returned to her and had destroyed his mad love for Miss Hogg; now he would love her as a dear friend only; he would no longer be heartbroken. Then his daughter would be a great source of happiness to him, and his gratitude to Mrs. and Miss Hogg was quite natural, for without them she could not be what she was; and Miss Hogg was right —it would be cruel to part her from them, and Walgrave was doing right in going to America. After what he had heard of Miss Hogg's generosity and her conduct towards Walgrave since their meeting in the farmhouse, and the trust and confidence she had felt in him since that period, he agreed with Walgrave that she was, after all, a noble-minded woman, and he hoped that she would be happy

when married to her cousin Tom; and he said he was really glad that he had done with her, for she was far too clever for him, and that if every case he undertook was as long he would find himself an old man with only a record of half a dozen cases to show. "And I now see that it is not for her that you require me as a detective. For whom is it, my friend? I am at your service in my spare moments, and I admit that your brains are perfectly sound and clearer than my own, but you can hardly blame me for my doubts, for the story you have just related is a remarkable one, though perfectly clear to me now."

"I am glad to hear you say so, Mathew, but I have yet a difficult task to accomplish. The lawyer is not disposed of yet, and if I mistake not will give us trouble. It is in dealing with him that I want your aid. I don't propose to bribe him; if we tried that we should never hear the end of his extortions. What I want to do is to shake him off; drop him by main force; and in order to do that we must know something of his past life. He does n't look like a man who would stop at trifles. If we can manage to find out some of his *faux pas* then we have him in our power. I don't intend to be mean nor hard with him. I have here two hundred pounds for him; but if I were to say to him, 'Mr. Bridgewell, I give you these two hundred pounds to keep your mouth shut,' he would take the money and laugh in my face; and if I should tell him the tale I told your chief he would not believe a word of it, but would investigate matters on his own account; then, having arrived at the truth, would threaten us with a scandal in the papers if we did not come down with whatever he asked; and if we did that he would come again and keep the parties concerned in this matter in perpetual fear of his visits, so that we had better strike while the iron 's hot."

"You 're right, Mr. Walgrave; a man like him is to be feared, and can't be trusted. Now, with my chief it is different; even if he had not exactly believed what he was told he would allow the case to drop. He simply obeys orders as we do ourselves; he could not undertake, for his own private benefit, to follow up a case that had been stopped; he would lose his place if he did. A blackmailer cannot be chief of police. But I think that you have read

Bridgewell aright, and have taken the proper course, for, after all, this matter does not concern him."

"Did you ever report to him?" asked Walgrave.

"No, I never did; I wanted to be sure of the whole business before I said a word to anyone, for I had failed so often before."

"That was very prudent on your part, Mathew, and will prove fortunate for us; you must help me to hunt up his pedigree, and I have no doubt but we shall find a skeleton in his closet, and you and I must get it out and face him with it," said Walgrave, "and then he will be glad to come to our terms."

"I am with you heart and soul," said Mathew, his bright black eyes sparkling with admiration at Walgrave's clever plan. He was certainly learning from Walgrave, and had been learning for many years, for they had often worked together on the same cases, and Mathew had always tried not to follow, but to get ahead of Walgrave, and, as Walgrave really was the best detective in Scotland Yard, Mathew had had to keep his brains working, and the more he drew out of them the clearer his ideas came to him —like water from good springs; and, being a clever man, with good sense and judgment, he had become in eight years, when we made his acquaintance, almost equal to Walgrave, and sometimes more quick-witted. He generally kept cool where Walgrave would lose his temper. But time and sorrow had changed Walgrave; he now kept cool and his brain worked wonderfully, while Mathew became more impatient at the obstacles in his way. He had been dreadfully upset when the reward for Lady Florence had been withdrawn and he had been recalled by his chief when he felt he was so near success. It had certainly been very trying and disheartening, and these disappointments are apt to spoil the best of tempers. But with all these drawbacks he loved his calling, for he was a born detective, and he felt his blood stirring within him at the thought of working once more with Walgrave against the lawyer, and he promised himself to try his best to win. He had always felt this craving to be at the head when employed on the same case, just as two good race horses do their best to win the race, feeling that they are equal, and each knowing the value of the other. So with Wal-

grave and Mathew: each knew how clever he would have to be to win the case in hand.

"Now, my friend," said Walgrave, "you know everything in this case as well as I do, and I want you to do your best to win; this is not work for money; this is probably our last race together; I shall be pleased if you succeed and come out the winner; but I must warn you that I am going in for it myself heart and soul, and that I am going to do my utmost to come out best, so that I am not going to ask you how you are going to begin; it would not be fair; you keep your own plans to yourself till the business is done. If I should discover Bridgewell's skeleton first I will let you know; and you do the same if you succeed first."

"Nothing could please me better, Mr. Walgrave, and I am glad that you have proposed what was nearest my heart. Use all your ability against mine and don't spare me; don't show me any favor, thinking to please me, for I would only feel pained and humiliated."

"You are the right sort, Mathew. I feel as you do, and I will not insult you by showing you the least favor if it is in my power to do so, which is doubtful, my friend, and you feel it as I do; I see it in your bright black eyes; you long to be at it already, and so do I. We start even, for neither of us knows anything of the man's past life. Now, my friend, that we have agreed upon our future course of action we will drop the subject and go down to dinner, or supper—for it is late."

They parted that night with their minds full of the new campaign against the lawyer, not knowing how to attack him; not even knowing if there was anything in his past life to conceal; they could not begin without a clew, and where to look for a clew was the question. Who would win? It did not follow that the winner would be the best man; chance might favor one more than the other. Mathew ought to have the advantage over Walgrave, for he had been in active service all the time, while Walgrave had not, and he now knew few people in London, and should he question those that he did know they might ask embarrassing questions about his resuming the detective business; while, on the other hand, Mathew, while going about his other business, could make inquiries

without exciting suspicion; it was his trade, and he knew so many people who could help him in his search,—lawyers, who are usually jealous of each other, and would rejoice at the downfall of their more successful rivals; so that Walgrave was certainly in the background and at a great disadvantage at starting, and he knew it; so he made up his mind to begin at the top of the ladder instead of at the bottom, and not to beat about the bush by questioning Tom, Dick, and Harry. His first step was to find out where the lawyer lived and what sort of woman he had married, and having done so, he called at his house when he knew him to be at his office. He rang the bell and asked the servant who opened the door if Mr. Bridgewell was at home.

"No, he is at his office."

"I can't go back to his office," said Walgrave, "and I *must* see him or his wife, if she is at home."

"Yes, Mrs. Bridgewell is at home. I will ask her if she will see you; walk in, sir."

He had not given his name, as he feared that should Bridgewell be told on his return he would be suspicious. After waiting about ten minutes the door opened, and a lady of about thirty years of age, with brown hair and eyes, rather good looking, entered the room and said, "I 'm Mrs. Bridgewell. What can I do for you? My husband is at his office and will not be home until this evening; but if you wish to leave any word or your address he will call upon you. The servant did not give me your name, sir."

"No, madam, for reasons that I will explain I did not give it; my business is rather complicated. The facts are these: a small legacy has been left to a certain Bridgewell, but by some mistake in the will we have been so far unable to locate the real Bridgewell, and as I have no desire to raise hopes in your husband's mind should he not prove to be the one that we are looking for"—

"A legacy?" repeated Mrs. Bridgewell, all smiles; "is it much? Are you at liberty to disclose the amount?"

"No, madam, not until I am positive that your husband is the real heir."

"Well, sir, what must I do to prove that he is the real

heir? what do you wish to know? Question me and I will answer as far as lies in my power."

"How long have you been married to Mr. Bridgewell?"

"Only seven years."

"O, I see; he has married late in life."

"No, sir, I am his second wife; he has a son by his first wife, who left him when he married the second time. Do you think that my husband is the Bridgewell that you are looking for?"

"I think so, madam. What kind of a lady was the first Mrs. Bridgewell?"

"I never knew her, sir; but I have been told that she was of a very jealous nature, and in consequence made her husband very unhappy. She had been dead some years before I became acquainted with Mr. Bridgewell."

"Did she live in this house?"

"O dear, no; I could n't bear to live in it if she had. She died abroad, but I never asked him where, as the subject must be painful to him."

"Yes, yes, of course; but why did his son leave home? Why should he have objected to his father's marrying again? Did he dislike you?"

"No; before I became engaged to his father we had often met in company and he had showed no dislike to me."

"How old was he at the time his father married you?"

"O, about twenty years of age; he left home on our wedding day, after having quarreled with his father."

"Did you hear what passed between them?"

"No, only a few words that puzzled me."

"What were the words?" asked Walgrave, at the risk of being refused an answer.

"Well, there can be no harm in telling you, for they really had no meaning as my husband told me afterwards; he only said it in anger. I heard him say to his father, 'If I wished to I could undo your marriage with three words; much love you must have had for my mother; it was you who drove her'—I did not catch the next word, for my husband said, in angry tones, 'You dare say the word and I 'll knock you down. Have n't I suffered enough with your mother? Must she stand forever between me and happiness? Did I ever give her cause for her mad

jealousy, and are you, too, going to wreck my life? Go with her, and never let me see your face again;' and the young man came out of the room, banging the door after him, left the house, and has never been here since. I really don't know if my husband would be pleased if he knew that I had told you all this."

"Don't say a word to him about it until we know if the inheritance belongs to him," replied Walgrave. "I will never repeat what you have told me. In what church were you married?"

"In St. George's."

"And do you know where your husband's first marriage had taken place?"

"Yes, at St. Luke's; I heard him say so to a friend of his who once happened to speak of his first wife; he had known her when she was Miss Amelia Smith."

"You never knew her relatives, did you?"

"I knew her brother; he has a tailor shop in Whitechapel Road; and I was told that it was to him that John went when he left here. John is my husband's son, sir."

"Yes, I understand, and I really think that the money will come to your husband. I must make a few more inquiries, then I will settle the matter; and take my advice and don't tell him that anyone has been inquiring about him; it will give him a pleasant surprise when I bring him the money; and if I should have made a mistake he will not feel the disappointment."

"I will take your advice, and only mention that a gentleman has been here for him, but did not leave his name, so that most likely he intended calling at his office."

"Yes, that will do. Good morning, Mrs. Bridgewell. Thank you for the information that you have given me. I will call again in a few days." And Walgrave left the house well pleased with his visit. True, what he had heard did not seem to amount to much, except the few words the son had said to his father; they sounded like a threat—"You drove her—to what, was he going to say? To her death? Even if Bridgewell had driven his wife to death by his unkindness that would not make his second marriage illegal—even had she committed suicide; and what could be the three words that would have the power to undo the marriage?

All that day Walgrave puzzled his brain to find out the three words; he tried a good many, but they did not bring the desired result, and that night he retired to bed still guessing. At last he closed his eyes and was just falling asleep when three words came to him like a flash, that would answer his purpose were it possible for them to be the right ones; but, no, it could not be; it was a mad freak of his overworked brain; yet, if it were possible, he would hold Bridgewell in the hollow of his hand, so to speak; he would be entirely in his power provided he could prove these three words to be the right ones. Bridgewell's son could clear up the mystery, but it was doubtful if he would say anything to implicate his father; he had n't done so for seven years and was not likely to do so now willingly; it would be a difficult matter to get at the truth; and the more Walgrave reflected the more he believed that he had found the right words; they seemed to sound in his brain like chiming bells.

The next morning when he awoke the first thought that came to him was those words, but somehow he did not feel so positive as he did the night before; and the more he thought the more doubtful he became, and the more impossible it appeared to him. If Mr. Bridgewell had not been a lawyer, the thing would have been not only possible but quite probable; but would he, one of the best lawyers in London, as Walgrave had been told that he was, put himself in the power of the law? Walgrave ate his breakfast mechanically, his mind constantly busy with the subject; only now and then would the sweet face of his daughter Isabelle come between him and the lawyer's supposed misdeeds like a refreshing draught to the thirsty traveler, and his heart would beat with joy at the thought that he had some one who really and truly belonged to him alone. He was beginning to see the silver lining to the dark cloud which had for a time crushed all his hopes. Happiness had not come to him as he had expected it, but it was as sweet, and he felt that he had yet some happy days before him; something to live for. He began making plans about his daughter, and he must erect a monument to the memory of his dear wife who had left him such a precious gift. Her spirit seemed to be near him, cheering him, and his heart felt lighter as he seemed to hear her

say, "Be happy, my husband; I live in our daughter; rejoice that I was not drowned before your eyes, as you believed, and that you have still the grave where my earthly frame rests; but my spirit is near you, and will follow you wherever you go, and rejoice to see you happy once more."

Sometimes Walgrave remained in a reverie sorrowful and yet sweet; he felt all the love of his youth return for his pure and beloved wife as if he had never thought of another. His love for Miss Hogg he now looked upon as madness; he loved her as a friend, yes, a very dear friend, but the love of possession was no longer in his heart; he could bear to see her happy with another without a regret as if she had been his sister

He awoke from his reverie, saying, "This will never do. I want a little reality; I wish to see my daughter as soon as possible, and I still have work to do. I must not leave my task unfinished; I must remove every obstacle that would be likely to bring a shadow over those I love; our horizon must be clear and bright; so, to work, my friend Walgrave." He left his hotel to go to Whitechapel Road in search of Smith, tailor, whom he soon found; his shop was not a common one, as some reader would think, nor is Whitechapel Road as bad as report makes it. The shops are large and well stocked, and restaurants are numerous. Furniture there is rather of the cheap order, but dress goods and millinery are as good as, if not better than, in the grand shops in Piccadilly, and at half the price. I have seen these things, though I have not purchased anything there, not needing anything, but having gone there out of curiosity, expecting to see a dreadful place. I was agreeably surprised at the sight that met my eyes, and I stopped at many shops and admired the goods and the windows, in the company of my husband, who was well acquainted with London. The only dreadful place I saw—and I doubt if it can be equaled—is Petticoat Lane; it is somewhere about Whitechapel Road, narrow, with dirty looking shops, old clothes, old furniture, and every imaginable rubbish. These shops are kept by low Jews with unkempt beards and dirty clothes, the women looking worse than the men. Some of the women were really handsome except for their bold black eyes and low repulsive manners. They do not hesitate to take a

lady by the arm and try to pull her into these dirty shops to make her buy their second or third hand goods. One fat, dirty Jewess tried to grasp me by the arm as we passed her shop. I was not afraid, but I felt very much disgusted, and must have showed it in my face, for she grinned and said, "O, perhaps the lady does n't think my goods good enough for her." I shook her off and said to my husband, "Let us hurry out of this"; but it was easier said than done; some of the other Jews and Jewesses crowded round us; my husband lifted his cane with a very determined look, for, being a captain, he was accustomed to being obeyed, and said, "Out of the way or I 'll strike right and left"; and they dispersed. I believe that their intention had been to frighten us, me, in particular, for I was only eighteen years old, but they certainly failed, for fear and I have yet to become acquainted. They smiled and bowed to us as we passed, but I must say that I was glad to get in the main street again, and I never made them another visit.

CHAPTER LXIII.

WALGRAVE was not compelled to go to Petticoat Lane, but to the fine, broad and well-lighted Whitechapel Road; and having seen the name of "John Smith, Tailor," he entered, and began to look at the goods in the shop. He asked the man who attended on him if he was the master.

"No," answered the man; "Mr. Smith is in the office; do you wish to see him, sir?"

"I do; call him here."

The man did so; Mr. Smith soon saw that he had a gentleman to deal with and was all smiles; he asked Walgrave what he could do for him.

"I wish to see some of your best cloth for traveling suits; I have been recommended here by a friend of Mr. Bridgewell." The tailor gave a start, but only said, "I am very much obliged to that friend of Mr. Bridgewell; it is more than he himself would do. But look at that cloth, sir; what do you think of it? I will make you a suit that will fit you like a glove for eight pounds, well lined, and made on the premises under my own eyes. Shall I take your measure, sir?"

"Yes, I think you may; I like the cloth; pepper and salt color will not soil so easily as black on board ship."

"Certainly not, sir; and the color will suit you admirably;" and the tailor took Walgrave's measure.

But to return to Mathew: he had visited several lawyers of his acquaintance to make inquiries about Bridgewell, saying that a friend of his was in trouble and wanted to see Bridgewell; but as this friend of his would be putting himself entirely in Bridgewell's power he had thought it best to make some inquiries concerning the lawyer, for should he not be entirely trustworthy it would make it bad for his friend in the future; and he wished to know if he had always been the respectable lawyer he appeared to be at the present time.

"Why not put the case in our hands?" said these

lawyers; "you can trust us to do all we can for your friend, and you know us."

"Yes," thought Mathew, "I know you too well to trust you with my business;" but he only said, "It is impossible for me to do so, however willing I would be, for he positively told me to put the case in Lawyer Bridgewell's hands. I am only making inquiries on my own account, through friendship for him, not through any misgivings on his part, for he seems to have a high opinion of Lawyer Bridgewell. Do you know anything to the contrary?" They smiled, shrugged their shoulders, and hinted a great deal, but could not in reality say anything decisive and to the point when pressed by Mathew to do so; so that it was pretty clear that the lawyer had a good name.

Mathew left them disappointed, and not knowing where to apply next. At last he made up his mind to beard the lion in his den, and try to find out what the lawyer intended to do concerning the case he had employed him on. He had no intention of accepting any payment from him, and he doubted very much if Bridgewell would be willing to pay him anything for his trouble now that the reward had been withdrawn. Yes, he would go and pay him a visit and try to pick up a clew there. As he entered the outer office where the clerk was usually seated on a high stool, he found it vacant, and the door of the private office ajar; thinking that the clerk would soon return, he didn't knock, but sat down on a chair near the door of the private office; he could hear voices, and a word caught his ear which made him start, and brought all his detective faculties into play. He moved his chair a little nearer the door, but not so near as to risk being seen through the glass door; and he glued his ear as near the opening of the door as he dared to do. Bridgewell seemed to be speaking to his old clerk, and not in a very low tone. It was evident that he thought the door was closed between the two offices. The words spoken by Bridgewell had been these:"What, another letter from my first wife! Will she never die? Must I forever live in terror of discovery? When did it come, William?"

"Yesterday, sir, while you were out."

"Of course it was addressed to you as usual?"

"Certainly, sir; they believe her to be my wife, not

yours; you have never been mixed up in the transaction, so why will you excite yourself and worry as you do every time we hear from there?"

"Well, perhaps you're right, William; leave me now to compose myself. You have told me all, have you not?"

"Yes, sir." And the old man walked back to his office, and if he did notice that the door was ajar he said nothing to his employer about it, as he found his office as he had left it, unoccupied.

Mathew, having discovered more than he ever expected, had beaten a retreat when he heard Bridgewell dismiss his clerk, but he did not go far; he longed to see if the old clerk had the letter, but it was more likely that he had given it to his employer; still, he must make sure before leaving the house. He had gone into the hall after closing the door gently, and having previously pushed back the curtain enough to enable him to see what was going on in the office; it was already getting dark and the clerk lighted the gas and made everything clear in the room, leaving the hall comparatively dark. Certainly Mathew was in luck; he was pacing the hall as if waiting for some one; but when he saw the light he approached the glass door and looked in where the curtain was pushed off, taking care at the same time to listen if anyone entered the hall, for he had no intention of being caught looking in the office in such a dishonorable way, that is to say dishonorable for a gentleman, but not for a detective. He saw the old clerk sitting on his high stool reading a letter, but was it the letter which interested Mathew so much? He could n't tell. The old man read on, then scratched his head; then folding the letter and returning it to the envelope, he got down from his perch, opened a drawer, dropped the letter in, and, pushing back the drawer, it seemed to close with a spring by the noise it made.

"Yes," thought Mathew, "that is probably the letter. I would give much to get it, for I can prove nothing by what I have heard unless I can frighten Bridgewell into an admission by making him believe that I know the whole conspiracy; but he is a clever lawyer, and the least mistake on my part will show him my ignorance of the whole thing. All I know is that he has a wife living somewhere, but

where, I have n't the least idea, and that wherever she may be, he has taken the precaution to pass her off as the wife of his old clerk. That 's all very well, but if I could find her she would soon clear up the matter and tell whose wife she is. O, if I only had that letter! I must think; where there 's a will there 's a way, it is said. Walgrave would know how. I wonder how he is getting on; he will never find out about Bridgewell's first wife, for it was only a mere chance with me; it was by no cleverness that I made the discovery; it was mere luck and nothing else. But I had the good sense to decamp before the clerk's return to the office or he might have suspected that I had heard some words at least, which might be very dangerous to his master and would warn him; but neither master nor clerk knew that anyone had been in the clerk's office." To-morrow he would call on Bridgewell and beat about the bush till some words escaped him that would give him a clew; he would first sound him about Lady Florence's case, and if he proved tractable he would let the other matter drop; but if he showed any intention of making it unpleasant for anyone concerned in the matter, then he would show his horns and make the best use in his power of the knowledge he had gained so unexpectedly.

But Mathew's time was not all his own; he had called at Lawyer Bridgewell's late that afternoon, hardly expecting to find him in his office, for it was just closing time. He must have had important matters to attend to, for he was generally at home before that time, and Mathew could not expect to have the same luck on the next day, so he made up his mind to call earlier the next day. The clerk was out and Bridgewell was alone, which was just what Mathew wanted; two might be too many for him to manage.

"O, is that you?" said Bridgewell, as Mathew entered the clerk's office, the door of his private office being wide open. "Well, really, you have taken your time about coming; what have you made out of the business, and what kind of humbug is it about withdrawing the reward? I have been so busy lately that I have not had time to investigate the matter; but I am going into it as soon as I have a moment to spare. What did you find out?"

"Well, Mr. Bridgewell, after all, it seems that we have all been on the wrong tack, and they say that the young lady has been for the past five years with her aunt, the Countess de Pascalina, who, as you know, died some months ago; and Lady Florence has been sent back to Lady Montgomery, and everything has been explained to her satisfaction. Since they have the young lady no more hunting is needed. I was recalled by our chief, and set on a murder case."

"And I suppose you have come here to see what you could get out of me, eh?"

"No, Mr. Bridgewell," replied Mathew, with dignity; "I simply called to tell you that the matter was settled and that the case was to be dropped."

"Look here, Mr. Mathew, I 'm too old a bird to be caught in such a clumsy trap, and if you were anything of a detective you would see through it with half an eye. That pill won't go down with me, Mr. Detective," he said, laughing in Mathew's face. "There is some mystery, and I mean to clear it up; I think it will pay. Miss Hogg is rich; she has bribed some one to invent that tale, and unless I 'm at fault she will have to bribe me to keep quiet; they have mixed me up in this affair and they 're not going to drop me off at their pleasure. If you had been what your chief represented you to be you might have been useful to me and I would have paid you well for your trouble."

"Yes, Mr. Bridgewell, and if you should fail in your expectations where would my pay be? And I must tell you that you are mistaken in Miss Hogg; she is not the woman to bribe anyone; she is clever enough to manage you or me without bribery. I must talk frankly to you, sir. Since the matter is settled to the satisfaction of the principal parties why not let it drop? Do you think it honorable to go into private family matters for the sake of gain? Put yourself in their place. If you had anything to conceal, which, of course, is not likely,"—and he looked hard at the lawyer, who had flushed at his words—but whether at Mathew's tone or at the hints and insinuations which appeared in his last words, it was hard to tell.

"Mr. Mathew," said Bridgewell, angrily, "have you come here to dictate to me? It seems to me that you

must be in Miss Hogg's pay or you would not be trying to throw me off the track. I must tell you that you are losing your time. I shall look into this matter and if there is any money to be made I shall make it without your help and advice."

"Are these your last words?" said Mathew, rising.

"They are; my resolution is taken; no one shall turn me from it."

"Take warning, Mr. Bridgewell; let the matter drop you value your peace of mind."

"Ah, now you are showing yourself in your true colors; you are paid by Miss Hogg to turn me from my purpose. She must pay me two thousand pounds down, and I promise to allow the matter to rest."

"You are wrong, Mr. Bridgewell, I am not in Miss Hogg's pay, nor in that of anyone else; I have not even seen Miss Hogg; but if I should see her I would advise her not to bribe you, as you might return too often for two thousand pounds."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the lawyer; "you 're not a fool, after all."

"I 'm glad you think so," said Mathew, calmly, "and I hope to prove it to you shortly. Good morning, Mr. Bridgewell."

Mathew walked out, leaving the lawyer puzzled as to his last words, but more determined than ever to sift the matter to the bottom. Mathew's advice had only made him more obstinate, for he believed that he had been sent to pump him as to his intentions, and probably he had now gone to report and would soon return to make him an offer. They must fear him or they would not have sent Mathew to him. But that Mathew was a poor sort of a detective, after all. What did he mean by saying that he would soon prove that he was not a fool? But his cogitations were interrupted by the return of the clerk, on whom he enjoined not to fail to tell every one who might call to see him, that he would not return before closing time, he hurried away to see a rich client. The old clerk busied himself until long after business hours, and when he saw how late it was he hurriedly put everything of importance in the safe and locked it up. He was on the point of leaving the office when a man walked in hurriedly,

seemingly out of breath, and asked, "Are you Mr. Bridgewell's confidential clerk William?"

"I am, sir; what can I do for you?"

"I want to say," replied the strange gentleman, in a whisper, bending his head close to the clerk's, "that all is discovered—all about Mr. Bridgewell's first wife being alive and you passing her off as your wife. Mr. Bridgewell has been arrested and his house is being searched, as will be his office here. I am a friend of his, and he had just time to whisper to me that there were letters here that would prove his ruin if found, and that if I would save him I must rush to his office and ask you to give them to me at once. I have come, as you see, at a run to save my friend; give them to me quick, and I will take them to my house and keep them until all danger is over. When they come to search the office pretend you don't understand what they are looking for; and, above all, don't tell that anyone has just been here or they might suspect that I have the letters. I was at his house when they placed him under arrest."

The old clerk was as white as a sheet, and trembled from head to foot, and he said, incoherently, "O, sir, you must indeed be a great friend of Mr. Bridgewell for him to tell you about his first wife and the letters. I thought I was the only one except Mr. Smith who knew of this terrible affair."

"So you were, till lately. Give me the key. I 'll open the drawer; you are trembling so you can't find the lock;" and, taking the key, he opened the drawer where he had seen the clerk put the letter the day before.

"Now it 's open," he continued, "but as I don't know which are the letters you must give them to me yourself, and mind that you give me them all or you and your master are lost."

The old clerk's trembling hand brought forth a package of about a dozen letters, which the stranger almost snatched from his hand, saying, "Now I 'm off; and if you love your master and wish to save him and yourself be a man; be calm; take a glass of something strong or you will spoil everything;" and he walked out of the office.

As soon as he reached the hall he snatched off his

long brown beard and thrust it into his pocket; then he turned his loose coat inside out, and from a light gray coat it became a black one. He then left the dark hall and hurried down the street until he saw a cab, which he hailed, and was soon going full speed toward his home, holding fast the precious letters and laughing to himself. "O, Mr. Bridgewell, I 'm a fool, eh? Well, who 's a fool now, to leave such letters in the care of a cowardly old man? Why did n't you burn them? Why keep proofs that will sooner or later bring you into trouble? O, what a fright I gave that old clerk! And he never suspected me. But how could he? My knowledge of the first wife proved a stunner for him. How will they settle matters, master and clerk, when they meet to-morrow? How I do wish I could have a peep at them. Ah, ha, Mr. Bridgewell, you like to find out about other people's business, do you? Well, so do I, my friend. I have taken a leaf out of your own book, and I am going to cure you of your appetite for other people's pie; I will give you such an indigestion with your own that you will never again feel inclined to go in for that of other people or my name's not Mathew."

Thus soliloquizing, he reached his room and hurried to read the letters, and as he read his eyes became bright with excitement; it was clear that he had a more difficult task before him than he had expected. Bridgewell had proved himself a clever lawyer; the plot was grand; he seemed to have foreseen and provided for future discovery; his name did not appear once in any of the letters; to a stranger they would have seemed quite honest and unimportant. His old clerk, William Penfold, had, ten years ago, placed his wife in a lunatic asylum, after an examination by two competent doctors, and he had paid regularly every six months, for her keep. These letters alone could not bring the result that Mathew expected; and, as he said to himself, after reading the last one, "Mathew, my friend, you have rejoiced too soon; you 're not out of the woods yet; that lawyer has checkmated you as far as the letters are concerned; but he can't retract what I heard him say to his clerk. Then the clerk would betray everything if questioned; he has no self-control. Then again, I have the location of the asylum where the wife is; still, I 'm not

so far advanced as I had hoped to be. I wonder what Walgrave is doing. He will win yet. I must pay the lawyer another visit to-morrow and find out what is going to be his next move."

Poor Mathew! He was greatly disappointed. He had thought the matter as good as settled, instead of which, he had made but very little headway; but he did not lose courage; he must crush the lawyer yet, cunning as he had proved himself to be.

CHAPTER LXIV.

THE tailor having measured Walgrave to his satisfaction, he opened his book, intending to ask his customer's name and address, but Walgrave, putting a ten pound note on the table, said, "As I am a stranger to you it is no more than right that I should pay you in advance."

"O, no, sir, a small deposit will do, and if you will give me your name and address I will send you the suit at the end of the week."

"Thank you; I prefer to send for it, and you can keep the ten pounds, but let the fit be perfect."

"You are generous, sir; I wish there were more like you; you shall have the best fit and make in all London, and none but my best men shall have a hand in it."

In the next room five or six men were sitting cross-legged on tables, stitching away; some of them were young, and others very old, wearing spectacles. Walgrave had been looking at them for some time; turning to Mr. Smith he asked him, suddenly, "Which one of these young men is Mr. Bridgewell's son?"

The tailor's face flushed, and he looked at Walgrave before he answered, "How came you to know, sir, that his son was here?"

"Why, I was told so by the friend who sent me here."

The tailor had thought it strange that a gentleman, as Walgrave appeared to be, would come right from the west end to Whitechapel Road to get a suit made and pay so generously for it. He wanted more than the suit. What could he want with his nephew? But he only said, "Perhaps you know that the young man is my nephew."

"I do," said Walgrave, "and I know a great deal more;" looking at the tailor as if he wished to read his very thoughts.

"Well, sir, I am surprised that this friend of Mr. Bridgewell's has not told you that John has not been with me for the past nine years. Did you wish to see him?"

"I did; but since he is not here I would like to have a few words with you in private."

"Certainly, sir;" and the tailor went into his private office, followed by Walgrave, who closed the door after him.

"Take a seat, sir. I am at your service," said the tailor, taking one himself.

"Now, Mr. Smith," began Walgrave, "I am going to ask you a few questions which will seem to you rather personal; but I want you to believe that my motives are honorable, and that my intention is not to make trouble, but to bring peace to all concerned. I know how John left his father's home and what he meant when he said to his father, 'I could undo your marriage with three words;' they were these: 'She still lives;' am I not well informed?"

"You are," admitted the tailor, to the great joy of Walgrave, who had guessed at the three words now that he had a clew to work on; still, he must go slowly with the tailor and allow him to think that he really knew the whole thing instead of guessing at it; and he did not dare make another guess until he could learn something from the tailor; so he continued:

"It must have been a great shock to you as well as to his son when you heard of Mr. Bridgewell's marriage, for you could not have been aware of his intentions or you would have stopped the marriage."

"Well, of course, sir, it would have been my duty to do so; but when the thing was done I don't think I could have mended matters by talking; it would have been bad for the young lady he had married, and for himself it would have been five years of penal servitude, if not more; for he, being a lawyer, was more criminal than an ignorant man."

"But why did he not obtain a divorce if he had grounds for one?—and he had good grounds," said Walgrave, pretending to know all about it.

"Yes, sir, in one way he had; she loved him to desperation; in fact, to madness; she gave him no peace; he had a hard life with Amelia, I must say so in justice to Bridgewell, though she is my sister; her jealousy knew no bounds; he could n't look at a lady but what she thought he wanted her dead so that he could marry again; she

would go to his office and if she found him talking to a lady client she would make a scene; he has lost many a client through her mad conduct; she heeded no remonstrances; she was incomprehensible, at least at that time, but we understood later on. Bridgewell never gave my sister any cause for jealousy, but he bore it all with great patience, for he pitied her. He used to say, 'Poor Amelia loves me too well, and makes her own unhappiness and mine, and I am the laughing-stock of those who know her.'

"At last she became ill, and the doctor advised traveling; he thought change of scene would be beneficial. My brother-in-law left his business in charge of a brother lawyer and went away with his wife. They visited Germany, Italy, and France. They had been gone about six months when I received a letter from him asking me to come at once to help him settle a matter of the greatest importance. He sent me a check for my expenses, for though I am comfortable I cannot afford to travel, nor do I care to leave my business to any of my employees for any length of time, and Bridgewell knew that; so that the matter must have been serious indeed to make him ask me to go to him. My first thought was that Amelia was dying, and, of course, I left the very next day for Havre to join him in the Rue Justevielle, where he was staying; and I was to take old William Penfold, his clerk, with me, which puzzled me greatly, but I did as requested, and the next morning we arrived at his lodgings. The first question I asked was 'Is she dead?' His answer gave me a great shock; it was 'Would to God that she were! come and look at her.'

"As we entered the room where she was I saw her struggling with a nurse and a doctor; her hair loose, her eyes blazing with the fire of madness; she knew no one—not even me. I could not bear the sight of my poor sister, and we left the room.

"Bridgewell said to me, 'What ought I to do? The doctor says she will never recover her reason, and she will have to be placed in an asylum. Don't you think it would be better for all concerned to leave her here in France than to take her back to England? It would be more of a disgrace to you than to me, for you are of the same

blood, and you have children whose prospects it might injure.' I agreed with him that it could make no difference to her what country she was in, but I said, 'How will you account for her absence?' 'In this way, Smith: in England every one must be made to think her dead; it will be best for all.' 'But,' said I, 'sooner or later it will be found out.' 'I think not,' he replied; 'and even so, who could blame me? It will hurt no one.' He proposed that old William Penfold, in whom he placed absolute trust, should take all the responsibility and place Amelia in an asylum as his own wife, and not allow the name of Bridgewell to appear in the transaction. I approved of the plan and she was removed to Pontorson, France, under the charge of two doctors and a nurse, the old clerk representing himself as her husband to save his master's name and mine from shame. How it has come to your knowledge is quite incomprehensible to me, for we were all bound in honor not to tell anyone, and I know that old Penfold has kept his word and so have I; and yet you know that she lives; her son must have betrayed his father; he was dreadfully angry when his father married again. He came here, and wanted me to take his part, saying that his father had driven his mother to madness. I tried to convince him that such was not the case. After staying with me for a few months he went to New Zealand, where I believe he still is, unless he has returned to make trouble for his father. Has he told you to make inquiries, sir?"

"No, Mr. Smith; what I know I have learned from another source; but believe me, Mr. Bridgewell will not come to grief through me; I feel for him; he has had a miserable life, and it is no wonder that he married again; he seemed happy with his second wife."

"Yes, I believe he is, though he never comes here; he fears that something might be said thoughtlessly that would lead to unpleasantness, or perhaps discovery, though sometimes I think he ought to have called upon me. His old clerk comes when he gets news of my poor sister, but she is always the same; there 's no improvement. It would be a terrible thing for Bridgewell if she were to recover her reason. What would become of the second Mrs. Bridgewell? In a case like that he could not get a divorce;

the law does not allow it; the party might recover unexpectedly and have a right to husband or wife."

"Yes, yes, I know," said Walgrave; for he had known sorrow himself, and he could feel for others. Everybody seems to have trouble of some kind, and each believes his or her own the worst; and each seems to be seeking for happiness according to his nature.

The love of the world is strong within us, stronger than we know; no matter how religious we may be there is a little corner in our hearts that craves for some happiness in this world, something to hope for. When all hope is gone life is very dreary; when our loved ones are taken away one by one, some of them so precious that they seem to have been part of ourselves, our hearts seem torn asunder, everything is dark before us; the only light seems to be at the end of our journey, where we hope to be with them once more and forever. But to return to Walgrave. When I write of the sorrows of others my own bleeding wounds reopen, and I digress.

Walgrave certainly felt pity for Bridgewell and would not bring trouble into his now happy home; he would reason with him kindly, and if he proved himself intractable then he would let him know that he had him in his power and could have him arrested at a word for bigamy; and surely Bridgewell would never go so far as to defy him for the sake of what he could get from Miss Hogg. He would see him that very night and find out his intentions. He seemed to be an honest man, and perhaps all the trouble that he, Walgrave, was taking to get him into his power was not really necessary; still, he must be prepared and have all the proofs he could get from Smith while he was there. So he said, "Your brother-in-law is to be pitied and I sympathize with him sincerely. You were right to remain silent about his marriage, for, after all, he has not wronged your sister since she is not likely to recover her reason. Is she still in the same asylum where William Penfold had her shut up—what did you say the name was?"

"*La Bonne Retraite* at Pontorson," replied the tailor, innocently, for he thought that Walgrave knew the whole affair.

"Yes, yes," said Walgrave, "I had forgotten; I was

on the point of saying *Le Bon Séjour,* but you 're right, it is *Retraite;* but I am afraid that I have been taking up too much of your time, Mr. Smith, so I shall wish you good day; I will send for my suit in a week if you think it will be done by that time."

"Certainly, sir; long before that time. But will you excuse me, sir, if I remind you that you have not given me your reasons for inquiring about my nephew?"

"Well, Mr. Smith, it was not worth while since he is not here; still, for your own satisfaction I will tell you that having learned all this story and the manner of his leaving his father's house, I felt interested in him and wanted to try to bring about a reconciliation between them, for my friend told me that Mr. Bridgewell has no other children, and he has the name of being well off. I intended to intimate to your nephew that it would be to his interest to be on friendly terms with his father; and when you write to him you might so hint to him."

"O, I understand, sir, and I think is very kind of you to take so much trouble about it and I will write and tell him. Good afternoon, sir, and many thanks."

That same evening Walgrave called at Lawyer Bridgewell's home to sound him as to his intentions concerning the matter of Lady Florence. This was the same evening that Mathew had secured the letters from old William Penfold. The lawyer received him in his study, and, of course, knew him at once as Detective Walgrave, whom he had seen at Bellevue Cottage claiming Isabelle as Lady Florence. "Ah, Mr. Walgrave, I 'm happy to see you," he said with an amused smile; for he thought, "They must feel that they are in my power to send two of their cleverest detectives to bargain with me about keeping quiet about Miss Hogg's sins; I 'm willing to do it, but they must pay me for my silence;" so it is no wonder that he smiled, for he already saw a gold mine ready for him to draw on at his pleasure. "Take a seat, sir, and tell me your business; I 'm at your command."

"Mr. Bridgewell," said Walgrave, seating himself, "I have called to inform you that Lady Florence is now with her aunt, Lady Montgomery, and everything has been arranged to the satisfaction of every one concerned and the case is dropped; outsiders, too, are requested to drop

the matter," he added, sternly, as he saw the cunning smile on the lawyer's face.

Bridgewell replied, "Easier said than done, my dear sir; I have been drawn into this business by no wish of my own; but after seeing that I can derive advantage from it you cannot expect me to withdraw because you choose to say, 'It is our wish that you drop it;' you will admit, Mr. Walgrave, that it is not businesslike, and that I cannot consent to the arrangement, I tell you frankly. I am a lawyer, and my motto is, 'make money when the chance to do so presents itself;' and in this case I see an abundant harvest if things are properly managed, and I intend to manage the case to the best of my abilities. That the principals are in my power is as clear as day or why would they send men like you and Mathew to pump me as to my intentions, as you have both done?"

"Mr Bridgewell," said Walgrave, with dignity, "I was not aware that Mr. Mathew had called upon you. When did he do so?"

"Yesterday, sir; and he begged me so hard not to interfere in the matter that I saw the situation at once; he told me a cock and bull story about Lady Florence of which I did not believe one word; but he showed me that my silence would be golden and I mean that it shall be; so you can tell those who sent you that they will have to lock my lips with a golden key."

"Mr. Bridgewell, you will be surprised, and perhaps not believe me, when I tell you that no one has sent me; that I have come of my own accord; nor do I intend to bribe you. Still, I had hoped that you would be willing to drop the matter and not revive that scandal since the principals in it are satisfied with matters as they stand now. You have the name of being an honest lawyer, and I must say that your expressed intentions have surprised me not a little. Do you really intend to sell your silence?"

"I do, Mr. Walgrave, and I still think myself an honest lawyer. If they were poor it would alter the case and I would be a scoundrel to rob a man of his last penny because I knew his secret; but circumstances alter cases; and in this case if I bleed the two principals they will not be any worse off."

"But it is blackmail," said Walgrave, with disgust.

"That 's an ugly word, Mr. Walgrave, and I object to it; I 'm simply paid for keeping silent, as I would be paid for speaking, on some conditions."

"But, Mr. Bridgewell, put yourself in their place; how would you like to feel that you are in the power of some one who has your secret and threatens to expose you unless you pay him what he asks you to keep silent? Would you live in peace after having paid him a certain sum, or would you not more likely live in fear that he would come again and as often as he chose; for having given him the first pay you put yourself in his power."

"I admit that what you state is perfectly correct, Mr. Walgrave, but you see I am on the right side in this affair, and will be the gainer, not the loser. If I were on the other side I might think differently;" and he laughed, thinking he had the best of the argument with Walgrave, as he thought he had had with Mathew the day before.

Walgrave sat tapping his boot with his cane, and seemed to be reflecting as to his next move; then, looking up at the lawyer, he said, "So you are determined to make use of your knowledge to extort money. I will not mince matters with you; I see that I am mistaken as to your character; I had hoped to settle matters with you amicably; but since you have refused all my advances I must tell you that not one penny will be paid to you for your silence, and you will be silent."

"O, indeed, how do you propose to accomplish such a miracle, Mr. Walgrave? You are really too amusing."

"I can assure you," replied Walgrave, "that it is far from amusing, and I am sorry that you force me to use my knowledge of certain events in your past life which I would prefer to let rest. It is not yet too late. Agree to what I have proposed and let us drop the subject."

The lawyer had turned pale at Walgrave's first words, but he soon recovered his equanimity as Walgrave proceeded, for he thought: "It 's all guesswork; he 's feeling his way, supposing that I may have committed some follies in my youth, as so many of us do, but he cannot know my secret; still, he 's a clever man, and certainly his shot was well aimed. I felt my blood run cold, and he must have read it in my face; still, he can never suspect the real thing; he only tried to make me betray myself, and

I nearly did it. I must be on my guard; he 's a dangerous man; his eyes seem to read right through me;" but he said, with a show of anger, "There is nothing in my past life that will keep me silent if I wish to speak. I am an honest man."

"My knowledge of the past does not bear on your honesty, Mr. Bridgewell, and remember that you are forcing me to speak, and I would advise you not to speak so loud, as it might attract your wife's attention and she might hear things that would not add to her happiness and peace of mind."

The lawyer was growing very pale, and fearful of what was coming, but he tried hard not to show his fear. He must discover how much Walgrave really did know of his dreadful secret, and escape him yet if possible; he would fight to the end. He said, "Really, Mr. Walgrave, I fail to understand you; pray do not hint any longer, but speak out and give me a chance to clear myself."

"Well, Mr. Bridgewell, since you will have it, and will not take warning—for I would have spared you if you had not forced me to speak"—and bending toward the lawyer, and speaking in a whisper, he said, "I know that your first wife lives and is at the present time in an asylum at Pontorson, France."

The lawyer had expected it and he bore the revelation bravely, saying, "The woman at Pontorson is my clerk's wife, not mine, sir; you insult me."

"Mr. Bridgewell." said Walgrave, sternly, "enough of this child's play; I wanted to spare you, but you would not be spared, so let your ruin be your own work; it is your doing, not mine. I will prove the woman in the asylum to be your wife beyond a doubt, and destroy your happy home, unless you consent to drop everything relating to Lady Florence's case. Now what is your answer? Let us not waste more time, but come to a decision at once."

"Mr. Walgrave, I can assure you that you are laboring under a mistake in regard to that woman; and as for Lady Florence's case, I think we will let it be for the present; perhaps it would be better to allow it to drop, as you proposed. I am very much upset, Mr. Walgrave, and I can't stand much more. Come again in two days and we will conclude this affair to your satisfaction; and in the

meantime I give you my word that I will not communicate with either Miss Hogg or Lady Montgomery, either directly or indirectly; will that satisfy you, Mr. Walgrave?"

"It will have to," said Walgrave, rising to go. "Of course you know what the consequences will be if you should deceive me. Good night, Mr. Bridgewell."

"Good night, Mr. Walgrave," said Bridgewell, aloud; then to himself: "I shall be ready for you in two days and able to defy you, clever as you are; do you imagine that I 'm going to give up the fine prospect that I see before me? The American heiress will pay well not to have her name in the papers, and for such an outrageous deed too. Then there 's Lady Montgomery; but I shall have to go gently in that quarter or it may prove dangerous for me; but as for the American heiress, I 'll pluck her to the best of my ability; she will prove to be my goose that lays the golden eggs if I can shake off that Walgrave. I wonder how he has found out about my first wife; I would give something to know. It must be that precious son of mine who has been talking; I believed him to be in New Zealand. Has he, perchance, returned, and is he going to work my downfall? However, in two days I shall defy him and Walgrave too, for the proof shall be removed where they will not be likely to find her. Penfold must start to-morrow morning. Amelia must be taken to another asylum under another name. I know a private asylum in Germany; the head doctor and I went to college together; I 'll explain matters to him; he will never tell anyone she is in his establishment; that is the very thing. Then I can defy Walgrave and that son of mine; he ought to be there too. I never thought he would have told after so many years."

As Walgrave left Bridgewell he did not feel very easy about the lawyer. He thought to himself I could not have done differently; I could not refuse the two days' respite; still, I know that he has a motive in asking for the delay and that he means mischief. I must be on the watch; he shall not escape me and have the laugh on me; he 's anything but a fool; he seems to have had the laugh on Mathew from his own account, but I doubt very much if he has taken Mathew in as he supposes. I must go to work early to-morrow or that lawyer will escape me yet; I feel it.

CHAPTER LXV.

MATHEW, after reading the letters, promised himself to pay another visit to the lawyer on the morrow. As he neared the lawyer's office he saw old William Penfold coming out of it, seemingly in great haste; his face was pale, and his lips compressed; he looked neither to the right nor to the left or he would have seen Mathew, who had no time to hide, not having expected the old clerk to leave the office before twelve o'clock to go to his dinner, and it could not be more than eleven o'clock. Mathew followed him instead of entering the office. Penfold hurried along until he saw an omnibus which was going over Waterloo Bridge. He got in, leaving Mathew behind him, for he did not dare get into the same omnibus, as he was not disguised; he went at a rapid gait on the bridge, but he could not keep up with it as it did not stop either to take on or let off passengers; and not an empty cab passed Mathew, who was getting very hot and anxious, for he had to lose sight of the old clerk. It was of the greatest importance, however, that he should know his destination. He could only see the top of the omnibus now in the crowd of wagons, cabs, and omnibuses going in the other direction. Would no vehicle come his way? He had turned round more than once during his progress, and he had failed to see any; but this time an omnibus was coming, and he thanked his stars as he leaped in, or, more correctly speaking, got on top, so as to better watch the one that Penfold was in. He saw it stop at the gates of Waterloo Station; he got down and ran up to the station quite out of breath, for it was uphill; he then looked all around like a dog who has lost his master, looking at the trains, then in the ticket office; but no Penfold was to be seen. A train was moving away; he stood on the platform staring at every window, and, to his dismay, he saw Penfold in the last carriage. Mathew could have danced with rage.

Where was the train going? He was told by a porter

that it was going to Southampton; then he guessed that Penfold was going to France—probably to remove Bridgewell's wife. The clerk must have told his master how the letters had been gotten from him the night before. The lawyer was proving himself a clever man. The letters did not compromise him except by the name of the asylum. Now if Penfold removed his supposed wife and took her to another asylum, how was he, Mathew, to find out which it would be? O, if he could only have arrived in time to take the same train; but he could not go without leave; his time was not his own. All these thoughts had passed through his mind while he went to the train office to inquire when the next train left for Southampton; he was told that one would leave in three hours—three hours of torture for him; he had time to go to his chief to get permission to follow Penfold; still, he did not do so, but sent a telegram and waited for an answer, which, of course, he soon received, and permission to absent himself for three days. He then dined, smoked a cigar, and walked about until his train came into the station; he got aboard, and felt relieved to be on his way. Perhaps the steamer for France would not leave before his arrival, and, if so, he would disguise himself and sail in the same boat with Penfold; but his hopes were vain. When he made inquiries he was told that the steamer for Havre had left an hour ago. He inquired about the next one and was informed that none would leave for two days; they only ran three times a week; but that a boat would leave for San Malo that night at twelve.

Mathew was overjoyed, for he still had a chance of arriving in time to prevent Penfold from removing Mrs. Bridgewell from *La Bonne Retraite.* He bought his ticket and went straight aboard the steamer. Being already late, he had not long to wait before he was on his way to San Malo. Would he get there in time? How slowly the small steamer was going! How the waves washed on the deck! How the wind blew and tossed the little steamer about! It was a wonder it could stand such weather. Mathew was told that they had often had worse weather than this. Some of the sailors had been on long voyages and had not met the storms they did on these short passages.

Mathew retired to his cabin, and for a time felt so

seasick that he forgot everything but his sufferings, which lasted until they saw land, when it left him as suddenly as it had come on; and he felt now none the worse for it, only looked a little paler. He was glad to land and satisfy his appetite.

We shall leave him enjoying a good substantial breakfast, and return to Bridgewell, who was greatly shocked that morning when his old clerk said to him, "I am glad to see you here this morning, sir; I was afraid that they would keep you under arrest."

"I don't understand you, William; there was certainly trouble at my house last night, but I was not under arrest; and how came you to know that anything had happened at my house?"

"Why, sir, the man you sent for those letters told me that you had been arrested, that everything about your first wife was known, and that a search had been made in your house; that you feared that the letters would ruin you, and that I was to give them up to the gentleman you had sent."

"And did you do it?" asked Mr. Bridgewell, with the look of a hunted dog in his face, which had become very pale as his old clerk proceeded to tell him what had happened the evening before.

"I did, sir, every one of them, believing it to be your wish; but now I see by your face that I have been trapped; but how came that gentleman to know about your first wife and the letters?" said Penfold, trembling in every limb.

"I don't know; perhaps through my son; I know of no one else; and yet he knew nothing about the letters. I am puzzled, Penfold. The party who got the letters from you must have been Walgrave, the detective. How did the man look?"

"Well, sir, I was so upset that I can't tell for sure; still, I think—in fact, I know, that he had a long brown beard and a Derby hat, and his clothes were some kind of gray; I know that they were light."

"Was he tall?"

"Well, yes, pretty tall; for I know that when he stood by me and whispered to me about the letters, he bent over to reach my ear; so he must have been taller than I am."

"Well, Penfold, you may depend upon it that it was Walgrave disguised. What time was it? It must have been before he called upon me, for it was past closing time when he came to my house."

"Well, sir, it must have been past six, for I had so many things to do that I forgot the time."

"Strange!" said Bridgewell; "that was the time, as near as possible, that he called on me; I can't make it out. Is it possible that there are two who know of this dreadful business? It really seems so to me. Now look here, William, the letters can't compromise me for I'm not mentioned in them; but the address of the asylum which is printed on the top is the dangerous part. You must go to France and remove my wife to Germany. I will give you a letter to a friend of mine there; and when she is in his care I can defy the whole pack of detectives."

"But, sir," said the trembling clerk, "they will be there before me and have me arrested."

"No, Penfold, they have the letters and they are not going to hurry to the asylum at once; what would they gain by it? They will either come here to make terms with me or they will write their conditions; in either case I will delay them for a few days so as to give you time to act, and when the thing is done I will laugh in their faces and defy them to prove anything. But, William, you will have to look calm, and should you be questioned as to your frightened look, you must say that it is the disgrace of having your poor wife in an asylum, and its being found out; and if questioned as to the reason for her removal, you must say it is the doctors' orders, for they hope that the change will benefit her, and that she was not to be excited by seeing strangers. Remember all this, for I may not have another chance to tell you; and all this is to be as coming from yourself, not from me."

"I know, sir; I'm not a fool, but I'm a poor hand at deception, I like straightforwardness, and all this upsets me. When must I go?"

"At once, as soon as I have written this letter."

He wrote the letter and gave the old clerk, and some money, with which he departed, followed, and missed, by Mathew, as we have seen.

And now we will see whether Mathew is the only pursuer of poor, innocent old Penfold, who was only a tool in the hands of the clever lawyer.

Walgrave had risen early that morning, determined not to give Bridgewell a chance of escape; he disguised himself as a Jew in good circumstances, and then, hiring a cab by the hour, he was driven to within a short distance of the lawyer's office, leaving his cab around the corner; he walked about, looking in shop windows, and yet keeping an eye on Bridgewell's office door. He saw the old clerk come up the street at about a quarter to nine; then at half past nine Bridgewell went in. "Ah, ha," thought Walgrave, "he means business to be here half an hour before his usual time; I thought as much, and I can guess pretty much what is going to happen." But he became impatient waiting, and he feared that the lawyer or Penfold had left the office by a back door, having suspected that they were being watched. He ventured into the hall and had a peep into the office, and to his great relief, he saw master and employee earnestly talking together, and his face brightened as he murmured, "All is going as I expected; he is telling his clerk what happened last night, and he would not do so if he did not mean to ask some service of him." Walgrave was partly right, but he was quite ignorant of the trick played on the lawyer by Mathew, and of course knew nothing whatever of the missing letters; so, having made sure that the men had not escaped him he returned to the street, saw that his cab was ready for immediate use, and returned just in time to see Mathew coming towards him. He was probably going to Bridgewell's. Would Mathew's visit alter Bridgewell's plans?

As Mathew neared the office Walgrave turned his back to him and walked away a short distance, and then stood apparently admiring the jewelry displayed in the window of a large shop; he had no fear of being positively recognized by Mathew; still, it was safer to keep at a distance, for he knew how sharp Mathew was. He turned around just in time to see Mathew enter the office, as he thought, but instead of that he saw Penfold coming out pale and stern and walking briskly towards Mathew, who, turning his head away, passed Penfold as if he had never seen him before. If Penfold had looked up he would have

recognized him as the detective who had visited his master, but not as the man who had got the letters from him so cleverly, and he would not have altered his course. Still, Mathew seemed well pleased that he had not been recognized by him, and after passing for a short distance he had faced about and followed the clerk.

Walgrave, after watching this amusing pantomime, got into his cab, telling the cabman to follow those two men; he sat back in the hansom to see what Mathew intended to do; he saw him run on Waterloo Bridge to keep up with the omnibus. Had they not agreed not to help or show favor to one another he would have called to him to get into his cab; but he knew that Mathew would not thank him for it, and would feel humiliated by it; so he simply watched the race.

The cabman having seen one of the men get into the bus, asked which he was to follow.

"The one in the bus;" was the reply.

"Ah," thought cabby, "I 'll bet my head that these here two fellows, the one in the cab and the other running, are detectives, running after the same game, and each on his own hook, or this 'ere one would have helped t' other one by giving him a ride. I wonder what the old fellow has done; he looks as if butter would n't melt in his mouth; but there 's no telling an honest man from a thief these days."

He became interested in the chase. When the bus stopped at Waterloo Station he stopped too; and when the old man went up the steep road to the train he followed right into the station and then stopped and wondered what was going to happen. Would the gentleman Jew in his cab stop the old fellow from leaving by train? He must owe him money; that was it.

Walgrave got down from his cab, followed Penfold into the office, heard him ask for a ticket to Havre; then saw him take his seat in the train which was about to start; and he was on the platform when poor Mathew came up quite out of breath, but still trying to appear natural and calm; and then he looked about for Penfold, on the platform, in the office, and then in the moving train, with dismay on his handsome face. All this had been seen by Walgrave, unknown to Mathew, who felt very bad, but would have

felt worse had he been aware of Walgrave's presence. Walgrave waited to see what would be Mathew's next move. He saw him go to the telegraph office. "Ah," thought he, "you are going to checkmate me; that 's what I meant to do;" and he felt vexed that he had not done it. Mathew filled a form, paid a shilling, and waited as if expecting an answer. What answer did he want if he had telegraphed to the place that Walgrave was thinking of? Perhaps, after all, he was not on the same tack, and knew nothing of Penfold's destination. How could he know? It was almost impossible for him to have found out about Bridgewell's first wife and where she was; so he waited and heard Mathew ask about the trains, then followed him to a restaurant in Waterloo Road, near the gates, and heard him order dinner. He seated himself at a table not far off, laughing to himself at the thought of being so near Mathew and the latter so unconscious of his presence. He now guessed that the telegram Mathew had received in answer to the one he had sent must be from headquarters, giving him leave of absence, for he knew the rules. He followed him back to the station and saw him leave; then going to the telegraph office he filled a form and sent the following words to the owner of the asylum at Pontorson:

"Do not deliver the woman known as Mrs. Penfold, even to her supposed husband, under any circumstances, until an investigation has been made, under penalty of the law. HENRY WALGRAVE, former detective. Send answer to Scotland Yard, Capt. Thompson."

"There, Mr. Bridgewell, this will get there before your clerk. I see now your reason for wanting two days' respite; you 're a cunning fellow, but you will not escape us;" and he returned to his cab and was driven to his hotel to await results.

CHAPTER LXVI.

Now let us see how Mathew is getting on. He hurried with his late breakfast, and was soon on his way to Pontorson, fearing all the time that Penfold would reach there before he would, for his passage had been much longer than Penfold's. Still, Penfold being an old man, might have taken a needed rest on reaching Havre, not knowing that he was being followed. Mathew consoled himself with all these thoughts, but still his train seemed to go very slowly. In fact, the French trains are not equal to the English ones in speed, very far from it; still, he was nearing his destination, and he felt overjoyed when he heard the guard call out, "Pontorson, Pontorson!" He left the car and looked about for a cab, but only saw a few small omnibuses which carried passengers but a short distance out of town; none went as far as the asylum; so that he had to go to the hotel, where he was told that he could get a cabriolet. On inquiry, he learned that it had been hired by an old gentleman to go to the very same place that he wanted to go to, and who had only started a few minutes ago; he could have gone with him, for there was room for two; perhaps he was a friend of the old gentleman.

"Just so," said Mathew; "how can I overtake him?"

"We have horses, sir," said the host.

"Have you two, and a man who knows the way to the asylum?"

"That we have, monsieur. Here, Jeannot, quick; saddle our two best horses, and bring them round; and you, Pierre," calling to a boy of about sixteen, "put on your jacket and show this gentleman the way to the *Bonne Retraite.*" Turning to Mathew, he said, "Will not monsieur have supper? It is quite ready."

"No, no; I am in a hurry; just let me have a glass of your best wine and hurry your men."

The landlord, seeing that there was nothing to gain by delaying Mathew, soon had the horses at the door, and

Mathew and the boy started. In about twenty minutes they saw a dark speck going up a hill at some distance before them. The boy, who took the lead, looked back at Mathew and said, "That 's our cabriolet, sir."

"All right, my boy, try to overtake it and I 'll give you five francs."

"*Très bien, monsieur,* I will do so;" and it looked very much as if they would, for the speck was growing larger; they were gaining rapidly on the cabriolet, and it was really Penfold inside of it. Hearing the galloping horses behind him he looked fack with fear as the thought came to him, "I am pursued." He asked the driver if he knew the parties who were coming at such a pace. The man, after looking for a moment, said, "I know one of them —a boy from our hotel; and those horses are ours; but I don't know the gentleman in black; he looks English to me; perhaps he 's a friend of yours; shall I stop?"

"No, no, go on as fast as you can."

"O, it will be no use, sir, we can't escape them; they 're upon us. If this gentleman is after you, sir, it would be as well to wait for him here, for he will be sure to catch us in less than five minutes."

"Go ahead, I tell you," screamed Penfold, who had become mad with fear; "go ahead and try to reach the asylum before they can come up with us."

"I 'll try," replied the driver, whipping his horse; "but it is next to impossible."

"Yes, yes, you can, if you only try. Is not that large building the *Bonne Retraite?*"

"Yes, it is."

"I thought I recognized it. Quicker, quicker, my man, and I 'll give you ten francs if you reach the house first."

"I 'm willing, sir, but the horse won't do it; he 's not equal to those behind us."

They were going down hill at a breakneck pace; the cabriolet seemed to be on the point of upsetting every time the wheels went over a stone, and the horse could not have stopped had they wished him to. They could no longer see the two horsemen, as they were still coming up the hill behind them; they soon came in sight, however, but they did not rush down the hill as Penfold was doing; they kept control of their horses.

Penfold kept on calling, "Go ahead, go ahead," not realizing the danger that he was exposing himself to by going at such a speed. His mind was set on reaching the asylum first. True, he could not expect to remove Mrs. Bridgewell from there with a detective at his heels, for he felt that the man pursuing him was one, but if he arrived first he could bribe the owner to deny that his supposed wife was or ever had been there, and so checkmate the detective; but should the detective arrive first everything would be lost, he would be arrested, and his master's arrest would soon follow. So he kept on calling, "Go ahead, go ahead!"

They had reached the gate of the avenue leading to the house, where Mathew, who was far ahead of the boy, passed the cabriolet at a terrible speed, his horse covered with foam, and Penfold, to his dismay, saw him reach the house. Throwing himself from his horse, and dropping the reins, he ran up the steps leading to the main door; it was opened by a servant and he disappeared into the house. Mathew met in the hall the head doctor, who had come to ascertain the meaning of the chase he had witnessed from one of the windows. Mathew spoke to him as calmly as he could, for he was very much out of breath.

"Are you the principal, sir?" he said.

"I am. What is your business?" he replied, leading the way to the private office.

"I wish to know, sir, if Mrs. Penfold has been removed from here."

"O, I see," said the doctor; "you are Mr. Walgrave, the detective, and fearing that your telegram would not prove sufficient, you have come yourself in hot haste; however, Mrs. Penfold is here, and, so far, no one has tried to remove her."

Mathew was struck dumb at the name of Walgrave, who had been before him, and all this haste had been quite unnecessary. Penfold had been checkmated by Walgrave, not by him, Mathew, as he had supposed. True, he had arrived in time to prevent him removing Mrs. Bridgewell; still, Walgrave had sent the warning first. How had he discovered the existence of Mrs. Bridgewell number one? Ah, Walgrave's brain was better than his; still, something must be done; the matter must be decided at once; the lawyer must give in; he, Mathew, would not leave the

asylum until he received the assurance from the lawyer himself that he agreed to drop everything relating to Lady Florence's case.

"But what has happened? What has Mr. Penfold done, and why should he wish to remove his wife from here? Is he not satisfied with our treatment? We have done our best to cure her but the case is hopeless; we told him so at the first."

"Yes, doctor, he knows it, and if you will allow me to speak to him in private I can promise you that Mrs. Penfold will remain with you."

The doctor saw clearly that there was a mystery, but that it would not be to his interest to try to fathom it; so he rang the bell, and when the servant appeared he said, "Where is the gentleman who came in the cabriolet?"

"In the waiting room, sir."

"Show him in here."

"Yes, sir;" and the servant left the room.

"Now, Mr. Mathew," said the doctor, "your business with Mr. Penfold is naturally private, so I am going to leave you alone with him, and if you require my presence you can ring;" and he left the room as Penfold came in as white as a sheet and trembling in every limb.

Mathew really pitied the old man, and he said: "Mr. Penfold, sit down; I wish to have a few words with you. Of course you know me; I am Detective Mathew, and you may as well know that it was I who got the letters from you. I know the whole conspiracy, and so does Mr. Walgrave, though he does n't know it through me. He has sent a telegram to the principal here forbidding him to deliver your supposed wife to anyone, even yourself; so that even if I had not followed you, as I have done, you could not have removed her as you intended to do. This has not been done to injure you; Mr. Bridgewell has brought all this trouble upon himself and you by his own obstinacy. He has learned, by mere chance, some family secrets, and he intends to use them for purposes of blackmail, forgetting, apparently, that he also had a secret that would be his ruin, if discovered. Mr. Walgrave and I have been looking up his history and have come upon the secret; but the only use we intend to make of it is to compel him to abandon his intentions towards the

parties he had intended to blackmail. Now that you understand this matter, Mr. Penfold, you may feel quite safe; no harm will come to you unless your master is so blind in his greed for money that he will not come to our terms. I wish you would telegraph to him in a few words that you are here in my power, and that I will not leave you for a moment until we get his answer; and if it should not be what we want we will arrest you and him both; and that, in any case, the so-called Mrs. Penfold is to remain in this asylum; if he tries to remove her clandestinely his immediate arrest will follow; if he consents to our terms his secret will be safe, so far as Mr. Walgrave and I are concerned."

"I understand, Mr. Mathew," replied Penfold, more calmly than might have been expected from him after the episode he had just played so prominent and dangerous a part in. "I will write at once and tell Mr. Bridgewell how matters stand. If I could have foreseen events I would never have had a hand in this affair; when it was done I did not think it could harm anyone, as we were assured that the lady would never recover her reason; and my master had suffered so much, and had always been so good and patient with her that I pitied him and was willing to allow her to pass as my wife to save him from disgrace. You must not think, Mr. Mathew, that I 'm a villain lost to every feeling of honor. My own life has been honest, and I must tell you that Mr. Bridgewell has always been considered an honest lawyer. What can have come over him to make him want to blackmail anyone is beyond me. Does the superior here know the truth about the lady?"

"No, not from me; of course he suspects that everything is not as it should be, but as long as the patient remains here it will be to his interest to keep silent."

"Yes, you are right, Mr. Mathew. Who is going to take my telegram to the office?"

"The boy who came with me."

"Very well; let me have writing materials."

Materials being supplied, the old clerk wrote for some time; Mathew declared himself satisfied with what was written, and gave it to the boy with orders to wait for the answer.

Mathew then sent for the principal and told him that he, Mathew, would be obliged to remain in the asylum until he could receive an answer to the telegram he had just sent. He and Penfold dined and spent the night there. The next morning the answer to the telegram arrived. The lawyer had acceded to everything, so that the affair was now settled. Mathew and Penfold saw Mrs. Bridgewell before leaving; she did not look unhappy or neglected. The doctor, having been well paid for his trouble, saw them to their cab. Mathew and the old clerk seemed to be on the best of terms, and sat side by side like two old friends, while the boy took charge of the horse that Mathew had ridden so hard the day before. The matter being so far settled to the satisfaction of Mathew and Penfold, we will leave them to return to London, nothing worth recording having happened during the journey.

Let us precede them and see what Walgrave is doing, and how the lawyer received the news by telegram or cablegram, that Mathew had Penfold in his power, and threatened to arrest him too if he did not resign all claims in the matter of Lady Florence. And this was the man he had called a fool! What a mistake he had made! He must be the man who had got the letters, and so found out all about the asylum and had guessed at the rest. After all, he had proved himself superior to Walgrave, who was waiting patiently for two days to elapse. O, if he had only had him to deal with he would have come out the winner. All these thoughts passed through his mind after reading the telegram, which he still held in his hand when a step was heard in the outer office. It was Walgrave. After exchanging salutations he said, "You must excuse me, Mr. Bridgewell, if I call on you to-day instead of to-morrow. I am in hopes that you have received news from France that will enable you to settle the matter sooner than you had proposed doing. Am I mistaken? I think not; if I read aright the expression in your face we shall soon settle the matter."

"How do you know, Mr. Walgrave, that I have received news from France?" said Bridgewell, angrily.

"Because, Mr. Bridgewell, I knew that you had sent Penfold to France to remove your wife to another asylum; and I also knew that Detective Mathew left in hot pursuit

of your clerk; but as Mr. Penfold had a start of about three hours of Mathew, and fearing that he might have time to remove the lady or to bribe the principal of *La Bonne Retraite,* I sent a telegram forbidding him to deliver her to anyone, not even to her supposed husband, under the penalty of the law. Now I hope I have made everything clear to you; and having seen the messenger from the telegraph office bring you a telegram, I have come here to hear your decision. If you refuse to come to terms I will wire Mathew to keep Penfold under arrest and bring both him and your wife here! and we will see if her brother, Mr. Smith, of Whitechapel Road, will deny that she is his sister. Now, are you convinced that you are entirely in our power, and that all that is required of you is to drop Lady Florence's case and your secret will be safe?"

The lawyer, during this long speech, had changed color more than once, and his face wore a look of wonder and astonishment at the cleverness of the two detectives having drawn their net closer and closer around him till they had pulled the strings, as Mathew and Walgrave were doing at the present time—and had him fast—bound hand and foot, without a possibility of escape. The lawyer saw it, and though he felt terribly humiliated, he saw the advantage of giving in, for Mr. Walgrave seemed terribly in earnest, and would certainly carry out his threat. He admitted to himself that Mr. Walgrave was acting very generously toward him, claiming nothing for his secret; he was acting the perfect gentleman that he was.

The lawyer said, "Mr. Walgrave, the less I say the better, for I cannot justify myself in your eyes; I have been in the wrong; money tempts some of us to evil deeds. I accept your terms, and will notify Penfold to that effect."

"Very well," replied Walgrave, "that is all I wish for; but bear in mind that the lady is not to be removed from the asylum; if you attempt her removal I will be apprised of it and will show you no mercy. Good evening, Mr. Bridgewell." Walgrave walked out of the office, well pleased that the affair had ended so satisfactorily for all parties.

The next day, while Bridgewell was in his office, Wal-

grave called at his house, saw Mrs. Bridgewell, told her that he was satisfied that the small inheritance belonged to her husband, and gave her the two hundred pounds. True, the lawyer did not deserve it, but the information he had received from the wife had been well worth it, and as he told Mrs. Bridgewell, the will gave her the two hundred pounds, though it came from her husband's people; if she told him so he would understand; and he added: "My name is Walgrave; I have been employed in this case, and it gives me pleasure to see you so rejoiced; may it bring you a blessing."

She thanked him warmly, but could not understand why he should have said so earnestly, "May it bring a blessing on you;" but as she had the money she did n't trouble herself to go into the matter any deeper; and when she told her husband he was surprised at Walgrave's generosity, and still more so when she spoke of his previous call, and how he had asked her not to mention it to him until he had ascertained for certain that the money was really for him; it would give him a pleasant surprise; and when he heard what kind of conversation had passed between Walgrave and his wife he knew how Walgrave had gotten his clew to trace his first wife. He must have gone to Smith, and by some clever maneuver made him reveal the plot by his looks or words dropped thoughtlessly; and, having put together what Mrs. Bridgewell had told him and what he had heard from Smith, he had guessed the rest. Then the letters—if it was he who got them—would have made his task easy; but without the letters it would have been almost impossible to find the asylum. Perhaps he had employed some one to get the letters from Penfold —and yet, how could he have known about such letters? He felt puzzled and he looked so thoughtful that his wife asked him if he was not pleased at her getting the two hundred pounds.

"Yes, yes, my dear, I am very pleased, and you may do whatever you wish with the money. I was only trying to think from whom it could have come."

"O, if that 's all," said his wife, laughing, "don't trouble yourself; we have the money, and that 's the principal thing." And the matter was allowed to drop, though the lawyer often thought how small a clew will lead to

big results in the hands of such men as Walgrave and Mathew. He learned later on that it was Mathew who had gotten the letters so cleverly from him; and yet he had thought Mathew dull—almost a fool. Why, he was equal to Walgrave; he could see no difference between them; they were the two cleverest men he had ever met. We certainly agree with him, and leave him to his reflections that it is always dangerous for people who live in glass houses to throw stones.

Even if we don't live in a glass house, we may have a skeleton in a closet, which we would be sorry to bring to light, perhaps not a skeleton of sin, but of sorrow so deep that it would make our hearts bleed afresh, and bring shame and disgrace on those long passed away, who were the cause of it. So let us close our closet and there let the skeleton rest, and allow our neighbors to do the same. Let us help, not injure, each other, and not discuss the faults of others through malice or for gain. Let our lives be so upright and honest in every sense of the word that we may not lead others to wrong doing; for we shall be answerable to God for the sins committed by others through our example or advice. So let us all watch and pray, for he that depends too much upon himself is sure to fail.

CHAPTER LXVII.

On Mathew's return to London he went to Walgrave's hotel, and they had a great time recounting their adventures while engaged in sifting the affair. When Walgrave told Mathew how he had followed him to Waterloo Station, Mathew laughed heartily and replied, "I remember seeing a tall, Jewish-looking fellow sneaking around the telegraph office to see what I was doing, but my mind was so busy with my own affairs that I only gave him one look; and it seems to come so natural for Jews to pry into their neighbors' affairs that I was not surprised to see him try to get a look at what I was writing, but I took care he did n't see. You see I never expected you to go on the same tack as myself. I did n't think for a moment that you had discovered the first wife, since I had only done so by mere chance. However, I 'm glad the affair is settled, and that we did n't fail as we have always done where Miss Hogg has been concerned. Perhaps her approaching marriage has changed the current of affairs," he added, laughingly; "it will take a strong-minded man to manage her. What is to be her name?"

"O," replied Walgrave, "she will improve in regard to name—it is Russell. I must say that her love for her cousin has softened her nature; you would n't recognize her; she wants to see you before her departure."

"I shall be pleased to see her, for she is, without exception, the most clever and brave woman I ever met. Do you remember when she pulled off your false beard, Mr. Walgrave?" laughing heartily.

"Don't mention it," said Walgrave, with a smile; "I shall never forget it; and to think that she had her foot on my badge all the time, and made use of it in Belgium!"

"But how came your badge to be on the floor?"

"Well, you see when she threw my gray beard at my feet with disgust, and exposed the bruised face which you had given me, I felt ashamed and bent down to pick it up, intending to put it on again, for my face was in a

terrible state, and I did n't notice that the badge had slipped out of my breast pocket on to the carpet, for, of course it made no noise. She must have seen it, for I remember that she came closer to me as if the better to point her finger at me as she accused me to the hotel keeper of being a blackmailer; yet, she would not have me arrested; she was too clever to go that far. When I think of those times and look at her now I can hardly believe that she is the same woman. O, you need not smile, it is no fancy of mine; you will admit it to be true when you see her."

"Well, Mr. Walgrave, you must forgive me for smiling; so many strange things have happened in this case; we never had one like it before."

"You 're right, Mathew, and it deserves to be recorded."

A week later Mathew was invited by Lady Montgomery to come to the farewell dinner that she was giving to Miss Hogg, who was to leave England in a few days, and desired to see him. She had asked Lady Montgomery to send the invitation, as she could not have invited him herself, having no chaperon; though Miss Hogg said to herself, "It 's all bosh; what harm indeed, if Mathew came to dine with me? .But I suppose that Lady Montgomery knows best, and I must try to please her." So the day before the dinner she left London with Walgrave, who had also been invited, old Mrs. Jerry going with them.

"Strange," thought Miss Hogg, "no one seems to find fault with me for being attended by Mr. Walgrave wherever I go—and I really feel, myself, that there is a difference between him and Mathew, who has no friendship nor regard whatever for me; he would never have fallen in love with me; he has no heart; and but for Walgrave's coming to warn me in America he would have made trouble for me. Dear Walgrave! he has a noble heart, and he is so refined and considerate in all he does. I am so pleased that Isabelle is his daughter and that he will be happy at the farm, with the Russells so near him; they will just suit him. After all, his life will not be wrecked, as I had feared it would be." All these thoughts came to her as the train was taking them to Cumberland.

Lady Florence was first to welcome them; she had been on the watch ever since the carriage had left the house

to meet them at the station. Lady Montgomery received them with her usual calm dignity, and when Lady Florence had run away with Miss Hogg she said to Walgrave, "Lord Montgomery has returned from America, and though he has freely forgiven Miss Hogg for taking away his cousin he will not be here to-morrow at the farewell dinner; he believes, and I agree with him, that his presence would be embarrassing to Miss Hogg. What do you think, Mr. Walgrave?"

"I think," replied Walgrave, "that his lordship has acted with great consideration for Miss Hogg, for his presence could not have been other than embarrassing and painful to her, she not having seen him since he visited her in America."

"I am pleased, Mr. Walgrave, that you see it in the same light as my son and I; and if I have mentioned the subject to you it is that should Miss Hogg feel hurt at his seeming neglect you will be able to explain his motives to her."

"I certainly will do so, Lady Montgomery, should Miss Hogg remark on his absence; but, if I judge her aright she will be relieved at not being compelled to meet him. Does Lady Florence know that his lordship is not coming?"

"No, Mr. Walgrave, she has not been told; but I understand you, and I will let her know and she will be sure to mention it to Miss Hogg, and it will come with a better grace from her than from anyone else. I hope that Mr. Mathew will not say anything in reference to the past that will hurt her feelings, for I wish her to have a pleasant time with us that she will remember in the future. Lady Florence will miss her greatly; she has a deep affection for her; Miss Hogg must have good qualities to have won her love as she has done."

"Yes, Lady Montgomery, she has a noble heart, and now that her mad freak is ended she appears in her true nature," replied Walgrave with great feeling, for she was still very dear to him as a friend, and he felt pleased to hear her praised by a woman of Lady Montgomery's standing.

He told her all about his daughter Isabelle, and how good Miss Hogg and her mother had been to her. He told

her that he was returning to America with Miss Hogg, and would live there with his daughter, so that she might not be separated from them, for they loved each other dearly, and it would be unjust to Mrs. Hogg, who had done so much for her, and who would be left alone now that her daughter was going to be married.

Lady Montgomery was greatly surprised at the turn affairs had taken, and she said, "After all, the abduction of our Florence has borne good fruit; without it, very likely you would never have found your daughter. The ways of God are grand and mysterious; they work for our good, though we may not see it at the time, and our crosses seem heavy to bear; still, if we put our trust in him, and pray to him to give us strength to bear it, he will, in his own good time, send his Holy Spirit to bring peace and joy to our sore hearts. The Holy Ghost is simply a ray of light and joy coming straight from God to us, showing that he is pleased with us, and the peace he sends is infinite; it fills our hearts with holy joy and contentment, if we would only listen to the thoughts and feelings they try to impart to us."

"Do you really believe that the spirits of our departed ones come near us, as some people assert?"

"I do; and if our love for them is great and we long to have them near us, they do certainly come and manifest their presence to us by signs that they are there—a feeling of joy, as if we still had them with us."

"Well, Mr. Walgrave, I have never studied those mysteries much, so that I cannot argue with you. I always thought that when our dear ones had gone from us they were so happy in heaven that they lost all thought of us here below and could not even see us."

"Lady Montgomery, I hope that you will not think me presumptuous if I say that your ideas are erroneous, and that our dear ones not only see us but would come back to us if they could, in some cases; and they actually grieve when they see how we want them back and how heart-broken we are. Our great desire to have them back brings their spirits down to us in feelings, or visions, or dreams—and it is not all dreams. But here come the young people, and I 'm afraid that our conversation would not interest them."

Miss Hogg and Lady Florence came into the drawing-room looking the picture of health and happiness.

That day passed very pleasantly for them all. Lady Montgomery spoke a kind word to her former maid, Mrs. Jerry, which brought back peace to the old woman's heart, and Lady Montgomery advised her to see the steward in regard to her cottage, which had been let by him to a respectable workingman who had regularly paid his rent all these years; in fact he was willing to buy the cottage and garden for one hundred pounds. The widow was delighted, and could not thank Lady Montgomery enough; but the latter replied, "You have to thank Johnson, the steward, not me; go at once and arrange matters with him." Mrs. Jerry did so, and the business was soon settled; she received forty pounds for the five years' rent, and in the course of a week she would get one hundred pounds from the sale of her cottage. She was overjoyed; she had never had so much money in her possession in all her life before, and she longed to go back to her son and Katy to decide what should be done with it; it was a fortune; nothing less; such a lot of gold pieces; for she had insisted on having her money in gold, and she could not sufficiently admire her forty pounds. And to think that a hundred more would be added to it! She could hardly believe it possible.

The next day Mathew arrived, and also Lord Frankford —Lady Montgomery having invited the latter to help her to entertain the two detectives. It will be remembered that Lord Frankford had been arrested on the train for having abducted Lady Florence, while Miss Hogg had looked on and had seen him and his daughter marched off to the police station while she enjoyed the joke. Now they were to meet she had the advantage of him, for she had seen him, but to him she was a perfect stranger. When he was told by Lady Montgomery whom he was to meet at the house he had accepted the invitation with pleasure and curiosity; he longed to see the lady who had checkmated the best English, French, and Belgian detectives, and was now on friendly terms with Lady Montgomery and the two detectives whom she had led such a dance. She must, indeed, be a clever woman; any other would have found herself in jail instead of being received

as an honored guest by those whom she had so deeply wronged.

Lord Frankford arrived before Mathew did. Not having been expected so early, the carriage had not been sent to meet him; so he had to take a cab, which he dismissed at the lodge gate, and walked down the avenue. Hearing a merry laugh in one of the summerhouses, he approached it, looked in, and saw two ladies and a gentleman who seemed to be having a good time, for another peal of laughter met his ears as he stood at the entrance to the summerhouse with the roses in full bloom all around him. The elder of the two ladies seemed to have provoked the merriment of the younger lady and the gentleman by some witty remark, and she herself was laughing heartily.

"I beg pardon for intruding," said his lordship, raising his hat and bowing politely to the three. "I'm Lord Frankford, and I suppose that, like myself, you are invited guests to pay honor to that clever young woman, Miss Hogg."

Walgrave's eyes flashed, and he was about to speak, when Miss Hogg, for it was she, placed her hand on his arm to silence him, and, rising from her seat, she said with a smile, "You are not intruding, Lord Frankford; we shall be pleased to have your company; we are guests of Lady Montgomery, except this young lady, who is Lady Florence. We were just laughing at Miss Hogg's queer doings."

"Lady Florence," repeated Lord Frankford; "why, I did not recognize you;" shaking her hand and taking a seat by her side; "you have grown wonderfully; you are quite a young lady; you have an air of *savoir-faire* quite astonishing for your age; that young American woman cannot have shut you up all the time with the wild Indians."

Lady Florence looked up at Miss Hogg, in distress, and would have spoken but for a look from Miss Hogg herself, who seemed to enjoy her new position immensely. So Lady Florence only said, "Miss Hogg has been very kind to me, my lord, and I love her dearly."

"Well, my child, I will not say another word against her in your presence."

Miss Hogg laughed merrily, and made up her mind to discuss Miss Hogg with the old lord; and Walgrave, guess-

ing her intention, rose, saying, "Lady Florence and I love Miss Hogg too well to listen to anything derogatory to her; so, with your permission," bowing to the old lord and Miss Hogg, "we will retire."

Lady Florence saw that Mamie was up to some of her tricks and meant to fool the old gentleman and make him feel very uncomfortable by and by. Walgrave felt that he could not, with honor, stay and listen. He knew that Lady Florence could not bear to hear anyone speak ill of Miss Hogg; so he had offered her his arm and they walked in the garden for sometime, and then returned to the house; they had become great friends—Lady Florence and Walgrave.

As soon as they had left the summerhouse Lord Frankford said, "Madam, your husband seems favorably disposed towards Miss Hogg, and from what I have heard, she is a designing creature. You are not afraid to trust him with her? Suppose she were to gain his affection, what then, madam?"

"I 'm afraid, Lord Frankford, that your well meant warning has come too late; they are very fond of each other already."

"And you allow that?"

"Why not? Where 's the harm?"

The old lord looked at her in astonishment and met her merry eyes; he saw at a glance that she was laughing at him.

"I wish I knew her name," thought the old lord; "she 's a fine woman, and of a very merry turn of mind;" so he said, "Since we are the guests of Lady Montgomery I think we ought to know each other by name. You know mine; have you any objection to telling me yours?"

"Not the least," replied Miss Hogg; "first of all, I am not the wife of the gentleman who has just left us; I am not a married lady, and my name is—well, on second thought I think I had rather wait until Lady Montgomery introduces us, with your kind permission, Lord Frankford."

"Certainly, my dear young lady; shall we follow the example of the lady and gentleman who have just left us, and also take a walk in the garden?"

"With pleasure," said Miss Hogg, taking his proffered

arm; "we can discuss this forward young American woman as well in the garden as in the summerhouse."

"Certainly, madam; have you seen her?"

"O, yes, and have often been ashamed of her. I can't understand how Lady Montgomery could forgive her."

"O, then I see you don't like her; she must be a boor; she must be very vulgar;" and he smiled at Miss Hogg, who burst into a laugh, saying:

"You will soon see for yourself, my lord, and I shall expect you to give me your candid opinion of her."

"Yes, I shall certainly do so; I am curious to see her. I have been told that she had outwitted all the detectives; if she did so she is clever."

"O, all mere chance; nothing more;" said Miss Hogg; but seeing the carriage coming down the avenue and knowing that Mathew was in it, and that he would recognize her, she said, "You must excuse me, Lord Frankford, if I leave you now; we shall meet again at dinner, and enjoy the company of that elegant and refined Miss Hogg," laughing merrily.

"As you will be there, madam, to counterbalance the vulgarity of the American woman I am willing to endure whatever she may impose upon me;" pressing Miss Hogg's hand, which he had retained; and as she drew it away with a smile, he raised his hat and she hurried to the house, entering by a side door to avoid meeting Mathew as he got out of the carriage.

She ran upstairs, and with Mrs. Jerry's help, began to dress elaborately for the dinner party, for she wanted to make a good impression on Mathew, and she promised herself to be on her guard and behave as much like a lady as she possibly could, for she knew that it would please Lady Montgomery. Her dress was of rich, mauve-colored satin with white lace; a diamond necklace was around her strong, white throat; diamond drops in her ears and diamond bracelets on her arms; a beautiful white camellia on her breast and one in her hair, which was her chief beauty—it was so black and abundant. Mrs. Jerry had certainly done her duty by her and shown that she had not forgotten how to dress a lady to the best advantage. Miss Hogg, in her present attire, looked as ladylike as it was possible for her to do.

Lady Florence came to her dressed in white silk, with blue ribbons; and a pearl necklace was her only ornament; her golden hair fell to her waist in curls. As she saw Miss Hogg she exclaimed, "O, Mamie, you look grand in that dress!"

"I 'm glad you think so, dear," replied Miss Hogg, kissing her affectionately. "This is my last day with you, but don't let us look sad," she added, as she saw a tear in the child's eyes; "let us be happy. We are going to have some fun presently. You watch when Lord Frankford is introduced to me. O, my heart, but won't he look blank!"

"O, but Mamie, that was too bad of you! Did he say anything very bad about you?"

"Not a bit more than I deserve, my dear; but what amused me is that he paid me so many compliments; and he is to tell me, after dinner, what he really thinks of Miss Hogg;" and she laughed merrily. "But we had better go down," she added, "for I hear the second bell."

So they went down the grand staircase and entered the drawing-room, where they found Lady Montgomery dressed in black satin, with ruby ornaments, looking grand and noble. She was conversing with Lord Frankford, while Walgrave and Mathew, a little way off, were discussing something that seemed to be very interesting to both.

They all looked up as the two ladies made their appearance—Walgrave, with pleasure depicted on his countenance, and Mathew with a start of surprise. Was that lady Miss Hogg, who had played them so many tricks, and had pulled Walgrave's beard off his face? He could hardly believe his eyes. She felt pleased to see his surprise; he was paying her a great compliment against his will; and as he looked at her he read merriment and mockery in her fine black eyes. Then Lady Montgomery and the gentlemen having risen from their seats, Lady Montgomery said to Lord Frankford, who was all smiles as he recognized the lady he had met in the summerhouse, "Lord Frankford, allow me to present the lady whom you have been invited to meet at our farewell dinner, which is given in her honor."

"Miss Hogg, Lord Frankford, my dear."

The shock was terrible to the old lord, who prided him-

self on being the essence of politeness to ladies; and to have insulted Miss Hogg to her face, as he had done! The smile left his face, the extended hand dropped to his side; he looked the picture of embarrassment.

Miss Hogg was delighted, and had hard work to keep from laughing her regular loud American laugh.

Lady Montgomery looked pained, and said, "Lord Frankford, Miss Hogg is a dear friend of ours."

The old lord recovered himself in a moment, and said, "Lady Montgomery, you mistake me;" and the smile returned to his face as he extended his hand to Miss Hogg, saying, "Madam, I hope you will forgive me for saying what I did of a supposed absent lady, in consideration of the respect and admiration I showed to the one who was present, which I sincerely repeat, knowing her to be Miss Hogg. Will you take my hand as a sign of forgiveness, and accept my friendship?"

"I was to blame, not you," said she laughing; and the old lord also laughed

Lady Montgomery looked from one to the other, quite puzzled at this new mode of accepting an introduction; but Miss Hogg soon enlightened her, and she smiled, saying, "My dear, you are still very mischievous, but you must admit that Lord Frankford, through his gallantry to the fair sex, has come out of this really embarrassing situation with flying colors." Turning towards Mathew, she said, smiling at Miss Hogg, "You hardly need an introduction to this gentleman."

"Hardly," said Miss Hogg, mischievously, extending her hand to Mathew, who took it with a show of respect and admiration for this clever woman that could hardly have been expected from him. She certainly had risen in his opinion. Walgrave was right; she had changed greatly, and really had a soft look in her fine black eyes that was not there when she had made him run after her cab. She was no longer the same Miss Hogg, but a very superior one; and he felt as the old lord did, that he would never dare express himself about her in her presence as he had often done in her absence. He said to Miss Hogg that he felt honored to have been invited by Lady Montgomery to meet her, and that it gave him great

pleasure to be able to pay his respects to her before her departure for America.

Just then dinner was announced, and Lady Montgomery said, "Lord Frankford will take Miss Hogg in to dinner; you, Mr. Mathew, will take Lady Florence;" and she, herself, placed her hand on Walgrave's arm. Mathew flushed with pleasure, and bowing low to Lady Florence, to whom he had been duly introduced, he offered her his arm.

The dinner passed off pleasantly, Lord Frankford and Miss Hogg had a grand time; he was a merry old lord, and Miss Hogg was quick at repartee, often turning the tables on him. Mathew did not say much but watched, and listened to Miss Hogg, and thought, "No wonder she outwitted us; what a quick brain she has! I hardly wonder at Walgrave falling in love with her. She has what is better than beauty—brain and good judgment; and I must admit that she is a fine woman, and, I believe, good natured. There now; I think that is a great deal for me to say of Miss Hogg after the dance she has led me these last five years and more."

Lady Florence enjoyed the jokes so well parried by Miss Hogg, and was pleased that Mamie was getting the best of Lord Frankford, who enjoyed it immensely himself, never losing his temper. As for Lady Montgomery, she was happy to see how well Miss Hogg behaved, for though she was a little more free and merry than English ladies are in general, still there was nothing *outré* in her conduct. Her travels had greatly improved her, and no one could have found fault with her.

Lady Montgomery had not invited any of her own friends to meet Miss Hogg except Lord Frankford; she had no wish to make her an object of curiosity as she would have become had she done so. Walgrave felt proud of her, for somehow she seemed to be partly his property—so many strange events had drawn them together, and his own daughter, loved and cared for by her, seemed to make a kind of relationship between them.

Late that evening Mathew took his departure, after having had a private talk with Miss Hogg, during which she said, "Mr. Mathew, I have caused you much trouble and disappointment these last five years. Have you no bitter feelings towards me?"

"No, Miss Hogg; those feelings are of the past. Knowing you as I do now, I say sincerely that I am pleased that you escaped us as you did; that you are the cleverest woman that I ever met, and that I no longer wonder that Mr. Walgrave fell so deeply in love with you as he did."

"Thank you, Mr. Mathew," said Miss Hogg; "I shall never forgive myself. As far as Mr. Walgrave is concerned I treated him shamefully, and it is he who has brought peace and happiness into my life; he is a noble-hearted man. I am so glad that I can, in return, give him a daughter who, I hope, will repay him with her love and care for the wrong I did him;" and her eyes filled with tears as she said these words. Mathew looked in wonder at Miss Hogg; she had a heart, after all; and he admired her more and more. He felt that he too could love such a woman if he were free; she was a dangerous woman in more senses than one. She gave him her hand at parting, and he raised it to his lips, a thing he had never done to any woman before. She left a small parcel on his hands, saying, "Take this in remembrance of me and our strange adventures." He thanked her, and wishing her a pleasant and a happy voyage, he took his departure. On his arrival in London he opened the parcel and found two fifty pound notes and a diamond ring worth almost as much; so that after all he had not lost all his time running after Miss Hogg, for whom he now had a great liking; and he often said, when alone, "I don't wonder that Walgrave loves her; I would have done the same thing if I had been free, knowing her as I do now."

He never mentioned Miss Hogg to his wife, but he often thought of her and her clever doings, even after he became an old gray-headed man. He kept up a correspondence with Walgrave and often heard of her. Here we will say good-by to Mathew and drop one of our most interesting and clever friends.

Walgrave returned to his cottage the day after the dinner, taking with him the best wishes of Lady Montgomery and Lady Florence for his future happiness, and a small casket for his daughter Isabelle, which was not to be opened by anyone but herself.

Miss Hogg remained a day longer at Lady Montgomery's, and when they parted her ladyship placed a

small parcel in her hand, saying, "This is a present from my son, Lord Montgomery, in token of his good will toward you."

Miss Hogg flushed as she took it, and said, "Lady Montgomery, thank his lordship for me, and tell him that I never knew what love was before I saw my cousin Tom Russell."

"I know, my dear," answered Lady Montgomery, "and you need not blush; he never suspected you of loving him, and he joins with me in wishing you all manner of happiness and prosperity with Mr. Russell; and he hopes that should you visit England you will both accept our invitation to pass some time with us."

Miss Hogg accepted the invitation so kindly given; and as for Lady Florence, she threw herself in Miss Hogg's arms and kissed her affectionately, and her cheeks, as well as Miss Hogg's, were wet with tears as they parted, with promises on both sides, to correspond.

Lady Florence felt the parting with her old nurse, Mrs. Jerry, and she gave her a purse containing ten bright sovereigns. Miss Hogg and Mrs. Jerry left for London, and Miss Hogg, having completed her arrangements for her return to America, she sent orders to the florist for a basket of his best flowers for the next day, and as soon as she received them she left for Southampton, accompanied by Mrs. Jerry, who carried the flowers. On their arrival they were met by Walgrave at the station, he having been apprised of Miss Hogg's coming by a letter which she sent the day before. He had a carriage in waiting and they were soon on the way to his cottage, and once more Miss Hogg found herself under Walgrave's roof. A good dinner had been provided in her honor, to which she did full justice.

They discussed their departure; in two days they would leave England, and though they would leave dear friends behind, they were going to meet still dearer ones on the other side. They talked so long that the sun was setting before they had thought of rising from the table. Miss Hogg looked at the beautiful sunset, and said, as she rose, pointing to the basket of flowers, "My friend, you guess for whom I have brought these."

"I do, Miss Hogg, and I am ready to take you there

since you have proposed it. I would never have dared to ask you, but I feel deeply grateful. Shall we go now?"

"Yes, Mr. Walgrave;" and they left the house, Walgrave carrying the basket of flowers in his right hand, while he gave Miss Hogg his left arm; and they walked away toward the little church.

Mrs. Jerry and the housekeeper looked after them, the housekeeper saying, "They are going to the graveyard. Mr. Walgrave has had a splendid monument erected to the memory of his young wife; you and I will go and see it when they come back."

Yes; Miss Hogg was taking flowers to ornament the grave of Isabelle's mother, before her departure for America. Walgrave was sad and solemn, and yet pleased that Miss Hogg should show respect to his young wife. The monument was of fine red granite beautifully carved and enclosed in plain iron railings, supported by four granite pillars. Miss Hogg knelt and arranged the flowers all about the grave in the most tasteful way; then bowing her head on the grave, she prayed for some time, her tears falling on the flowers, as she thought of the young wife cut down in such a terrible manner, and how strange it was that she should be the chosen one to bring up the child of this unfortunate lady. She saw the finger of God in all this. She had become so engrossed with her sad thoughts that she had forgotten Walgrave until she heard a sob; and, looking up, she saw him with his face against the monument, his frame shaking with emotion. She rose to her feet and said, "Mr. Walgrave, though the remains of your wife rest here, her spirit will follow us wherever we go; in fact, she has been guiding our steps these years past, unknown to us, it is true; still, the fact remains the same. She left dear Isabelle to be your consolation some day; she guided me in my choice of her; she brought you and me together so that one day the truth might be revealed to you; though the shock has been great for you still you have much for which to rejoice; she has sent you a precious gift from the grave, you may say; had she been drowned, as you believed, you would be a lonely man this day, and I a very unhappy woman; for after wronging you as I did I should be powerless to partially undo the wrong I did you."

"You are right," replied Walgrave, trying to calm himself; "you have joined hands with my dear young wife to bring me peace and joy, and I am thankful to you both who are so dear to me;" and he held out his hand to Miss Hogg across the grave. Miss Hogg, in accepting his hand, felt that she was not wronging the one resting there, for she had never loved Walgrave, nor did he love her now as he had done some years before; even now, as they stood hand in hand, the grave was between them; Walgrave felt it; his wife's grave had cured him of his mad love for Miss Hogg; she was dear to him as a friend, a relation, but nothing more. They both knelt and prayed with their hands clasped; it was their farewell to that dear one; they seemed to be promising eternal friendship with that grave between them, which they were never again to see. They rose to go. Miss Hogg took up one of the beautiful white roses and gave it in silence to Walgrave, who silently accepted it; then he offered her his arm and they left the cemetery to return to the house, where Miss Hogg remained until the next day, when she returned with Mrs. Jerry to London, where Walgrave was to meet her a day later, when they were to take their departure for Liverpool.

Walgrave arranged with James Gray and his wife to attend to the grave and keep it in order, gave up the lease of his cottage and discharged his housekeeper; in fact, settled his business; as he was not likely to ever return. Carlo was to go with his master to America. Having completed his arrangements, he joined Miss Hogg; they were soon on their way to Liverpool, and the next day they left for America.

Miss Hogg was in high spirits at the thought of soon seeing Tom. The time had seemed long to her and to him too, if she could believe his loving letters, of which she had about a dozen. Isabelle had also written her father some very loving letters; but she wrote to Miss Hogg that it would seem very strange to call Mr. Walgrave papa; she had never even had a good look at him. When he came to the farm she had remarked that he was tall, dark, and sad looking; was it because he had lost her? Had some one stolen her away from him while she was a baby, and was that the cause of his sadness? If so, she would love him very much; she would try to do so. She closed

by saying, "When is he coming back, and you, too, Mamie? I miss you so much; do come back and bring my papa with you; I long to see you both." Isabelle's letters were very long and full of inquiries, for, of course, she had not been told in detail how it had been found out that she was Mr. Walgrave's daughter; she had simply been told the facts, and that her mother was dead. She was too young to understand the terrible tragedy of her mother's death, and under what strange circumstances she had first seen the light.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

In due time Miss Hogg and Mr. Walgrave arrived in New York, nothing unusual having occurred during the voyage. It had been arranged that Miss Hogg should go direct to her home in Fifth Avenue, while Walgrave would proceed to the farm, where Isabelle was waiting for him. It was thought best that the first meeting should take place there, for Walgrave's recollections of Mr. Hogg's mansion would necessarily have been painful; so when the steamer reached New York they parted, Miss Hogg promising to visit them at the farm in the course of a week. Tom and Mrs. Hogg were on the pier to receive them, and Miss Hogg felt happy as she saw the joy and happiness beaming on Tom's face at the sight of her. As she bade Walgrave good-by she pressed his hand and said with emotion, "How I thank you, my friend, for the life of happiness I see before me! it is your work. May you, too, be truly happy some day! Kiss dear Isabelle for me; I will soon go down to the farm."

Tom had shaken hands with Walgrave in a hearty manner, thanking him for having brought back his Mamie safe, and saying, "You will soon have to come back to New York, Mr. Walgrave, for I mean to have my marriage take place in less than a month; I have waited long enough."

"Come, come," said Miss Hogg, laughing, "don't be too sure; perhaps Mr. Walgrave and I will go for another trip, who knows?"

"Don't notice her," said her mother; "she will be just as pleased to get married in a month as you will be."

"O, my heart, ma, but you put it strong," said Mamie, blushing.

"Well, my dear, why have you brought that grand wedding dress if not to wear it?"

Tom laughingly placed Mamie's hand on his arm and leading her to the carriage, whispered lovingly, "Is it not

true, my love? I have missed you so much that I cannot part from you again."

"Yes, dear Tom, I am happy to be with you once more; the time has been long to me too; I feel truly happy; I have nothing to wish for; nothing could add to my happiness." He pressed her hand and they entered the carriage.

Mr. Walgrave helped Mrs. Hogg in, saw them depart, and their happy faces sent peace and joy into his heart and a smile of satisfaction to his face, for this was his work; and he murmured, as he entered his own carriage, "Forgiveness brings more joy than revenge. How beautifully everything has turned out! Now for my own dear Isabelle, my dear young wife's precious gift."

He went to the railway station, and in due time arrived at Jefferson City. Jerry was there waiting, having been apprised of his arrival by Tom. Walgrave inquired about his daughter and was told that she would have come to meet him, but that Katy had persuaded her not to do so, as she thought it better that the first meeting should take place at the farm rather than at the station, as she feared that it would be trying for both father and daughter; and Walgrave approved of Katy's forethought.

As the carriage stopped at the gate the door opened; Isabelle came running out and seemed on the point of rushing into her father's arms; but she suddenly stopped short and looked up at him shyly. Walgrave's emotion was great as he drew her to him and kissed her, holding her in his arms in a loving embrace, tears of joy and sorrow moistening his cheeks as he thought of his young wife, for Isabelle was the image of her mother. She felt the tears fall on her face and her young heart went over to her father. Throwing her arms around his neck, she said, "O, dear papa, don't cry; I love you already, and will try to make you happy; you shall not lose me again." Her shyness was all gone; she spoke to him as if she had never been parted from him, for she had no idea that he had never seen her when she was a baby.

Walgrave, recovering himself, said, "You are right, my darling, you shall never lose me; we are going to be all in all to each other;" and they walked into the house, Isabelle feeling proud of her handsome papa.

Carlo followed his master with a sad look, for he seemed forgotten; but as Isabelle was on the point of closing the door she saw the dog, and exclaimed, "O, papa, is that your dog? How large and beautiful he is!"

"Yes, my dear, and I had almost forgotten my poor Carlo; come here, old fellow, and get acquainted with your new mistress."

The dog wagged his tail and jumped around his master, pleased at being noticed. He made friends with Isabelle at once, and he was allowed in the dining room for that evening. Mary Russell was there to help to entertain Walgrave. He was pleased to see her, and told her that it was kind and considerate of her to come.

Dinner was soon served; it was a real English dinner, and had been prepared by Mary herself; still, Walgrave did not do justice to it and he apologized for his want of appetite. Mary said she understood his feelings and perhaps he would have preferred to be alone with Isabelle. Walgrave looked pained, and replied, "No, Miss Russell, your presence has been a great relief to me and to my dear daughter too, I am quite certain."

"You are right, papa, I would have been afraid to meet you all alone; it was all so strange to me."

"O, that feeling will soon pass away," said Mary, smiling.

"Yes, Miss Russell, we shall soon get accustomed to each other. I have not yet inquired about your family; it is quite unpardonable on my part."

"They are all quite well, Mr. Walgrave, and, with your permission will call to see you this evening. I think I hear John already."

"I shall feel honored, Miss Russell; and I cannot thank you enough for your kindness to my daughter and myself."

"It has been a pleasure to us, Mr. Walgrave," replied Mary.

Isabelle, on hearing John, had left the room, and soon returned holding him by the hand; she introduced him to her father as her playmate. "We have lots of fun together," she said, while John blushed like a girl. Mr. and Mrs. Russell soon came in with Julia, and a happy evening was spent; they all felt at home with each other, and as

if they had known one another for years. Mr. Walgrave felt peace return to his heart and saw that he could be happy yet—that he had reached the silver lining of his dark cloud. When the Russells left him, asking him to come to Russell farm the next evening to see the old people, who longed to welcome Isabelle's father, he accepted the invitation with pleasure. As for Isabelle, she was quite at home with the Russells; just like one of themselves; she went back and forth from one farm to the other with perfect freedom, and Walgrave soon became a frequent visitor at Russell farm. The old people could never have enough of his company; they loved to talk about England together, for the old country was still dear to them.

It had been arranged that Mrs. Jerry would remain at the farm as Walgrave's housekeeper, and her money be placed at interest, and that a cottage would be built for Jerry and his wife, who were to manage the farm for Mr. Walgrave, at a good salary.

Poor Katy was happy at last; no more fear of discovery, but peace and comfort all around. She had the greatest respect for Walgrave and often said to her husband, "What a good man he is! How forgiving he has been and what happiness he has brought to all of us! And to think that the child that Mamie chose to mystify him and others has turned out to be his daughter! I am so glad! Thanks be to God for that! And how beautiful she is, though not like her father one bit, for she is fair, and he is so dark, but quite as handsome in his style. And I declare that he is looking much younger than he was last year when he gave us such a fright by coming so unexpectedly to the farm. They 're very fond of him at Russell farm," and she added in a whisper, "I should n't wonder if in a year or two we were to have a wedding."

"What do you mean?" asked Jerry; "I can't make you out, Katy."

"I mean between Mr. Walgrave and Miss Mary Russell."

"O, what nonsense! You women always see love and marriage if you happen to see people smile at each other."

"No, Jerry, no; you 'll see. Mary Russell always admired Mr. Walgrave from the time he came to ask for Mamie, and she said he was the handsomest man she had

ever seen, he looked so frank and noble; and now when he talks to her there is a look of happiness in her bright face, which, to me, is love; though she may not know it herself, I do; Mr. Walgrave likes her company, you can see that yourself; and Isabelle is very fond of Miss Russell and would welcome her as her mamma. If a suitor appeared for Miss Mary, Mr. Walgrave would soon discover that he could n't spare her; that would open his eyes."

"But she is so young compared with him," remarked Jerry.

"No younger than Mamie; they are the same age; and I 'm sure that Mr. Walgrave does n't look old now that he 's happy; and, though he has gray hair, he can't be called an old man."

"No, no, certainly not, and perhaps you 're right; but do keep your mouth shut or you might do mischief."

"Of course, Jerry, it is only to you that I would dare talk about such a thing; but you 'll see that I 'm right."

Mamie had come to the farm and invited every one to come to her wedding. Mary and Julia were to be bridesmaids. Mr. Walgrave was asked by Tom and Mamie to be best man, but he refused, saying that he wished them all the happiness that human beings could find in this world, but that he would not attend the wedding; he thought it would be best not to do so; he wished the past to be forgotten, and his presence would be sure to cast a shadow in some way or other. Mr. Hogg would be sure to say something if he saw him there, and it would make it unpleasant for all concerned. They could but agree with him in the light in which he had put it. Miss Hogg's eyes filled with tears as she pressed his hand, saying, "O, it 's all my doing; I 'm so sorry!"

"Don't say another word, Miss Hogg, unless you wish to pain me. Our dear Isabelle will represent me there as your youngest bridesmaid."

"Here, Isabelle," he continued, calling to his daughter; "come, my dear, and show Miss Hogg Lady Montgomery's present."

Isabelle came in, all smiles, with the casket in her hands, and opening it she said, "Look, Mamie, what do you think of these pearls? I 'm to wear them at your wedding."

"They are beautiful, my dear, and will look lovely on your fair neck and arms."

"And just think, Mamie, there was a check in this box for one thousand pounds to be put at interest until I marry. Lady Montgomery has acted nobly."

"She also gave me a present as I left her," said Miss Hogg; "it is a *parure* of pearls and diamonds. I am to wear it on my wedding day."

The elder Russells also made up their minds not to go to New York; they did not feel equal to the fatigue; but Mr. and Mrs. Russell, John, and, of course, the Misses Russell and Isabelle accompanied Tom and Mamie back to New York, the wedding taking place a week later at St. Peter's Church; it was Mr. Hogg's wish that the marriage should take place there, so as to be seen by those who so often had looked down on him, and he had the pleasure of meeting many down Broadway. It was a grand affair—ten bridesmaids in white and pink. Isabelle was the queen for beauty; John Russell was her escort, and he felt the happiest young man in the world; many present predicted that in a few years there would be another grand wedding in the Russell family. Mr. Godfrey, Tom's partner, was his best man. Mamie, though not a beauty, looked grand with her London-made dress of white satin, lace and ribbons, orange blossoms and myrtle, and her beautiful handmade veil from Brussels, which cost five hundred dollars. She wore the pearls and diamonds, the gift of Lady Montgomery; her bouquet of white roses and lilies was the gift of Tom, who felt the happiest man in all the world as he looked up to his bride and read in her beaming face devoted and true love for himself.

Yes, Mamie was truly happy. How proud she felt as she stood at the altar, by the side of her cousin Tom, and how her heart beat with joy to think that he was hers for life; that noble and handsome man who loved her with all his heart! O, she did not deserve such happiness!

Tom wore a black suit, white satin waistcoat, with satin ribbons and orange blossoms in his buttonhole, white kid gloves, etc.; he looked perfectly English so tall and straight; hair and mustaches fair and curly, dark blue eyes with dark lashes—a rare thing for fair people. How the bridesmaids envied the bride! Not one of them would have

refused him; he was the handsomest man there. Even Mr. Hogg felt proud of his son-in-law, and Mrs. Hogg's face beamed with joy as she replied to the questions of her friends as to who he was—from what family.

"He is my nephew—my eldest brother's son; there stand his father and mother;" and every one had to admit that the Russells were a handsome family.

At last the wedding was over. There had been no weeping on the part of the bride; she had answered "I will," firmly and joyfully, meeting her young husband's loving looks with equally loving ones; she trusted him entirely, and, as they left the church together they were good to look at, as all newly married couples ought to be. They loved and trusted each other. Whatever happened in the future, their love would never change.

Mr. Hogg gave a grand dinner in honor of his daughter's wedding; then the young married couple left for Washington, where they had agreed to spend their honeymoon; after which they were to return to their house in Clinton avenue, Brooklyn, after having paid a visit to the elder Russells and Walgrave, Isabelle and the Russells returned to their homes the day after the wedding, Tom's partner accompanying them on their way. Two days later he called at Russell farm and proposed to Mary Russell, who kindly but firmly refused him, giving him no hope. Julia blushed when she heard of it but made no remarks.

"My dear," said her mother, "why did n't you take time to reflect? You might have learned to love him; he is all one could wish, and you are over twenty-six; don't you intend to marry? You refused Farmer Brown some years ago, and I did n't blame you; but Mr. Godfrey is quite another man."

"Don't speak of him, mamma; I don't love him; and unless I can love him as Mamie loves Tom I will not marry."

So no more was said about it, except by John, who told Isabelle about the offer of marriage and the refusal.

"I 'm so pleased," said Isabelle; "we can't spare Mary, can we, papa?" for he was there looking troubled, and did n't answer, but hurried away, leaving the young people

to infer that he had not heard, or did not feel interested in the matter.

From that time Walgrave seemed a changed man; he no longer spoke to Mary in his old and free manner, but would look at her with what appeared to be great interest and uneasiness; and if their eyes met he felt embarrassed and would look another way, never noticing the rosy blush on Mary's cheeks. Mary had ceased to visit the farm, to Isabelle's great sorrow, and she asked her more than once why she never came now.

"Well, my dear," was the answer, "you are quite accustomed to your father now and you don't need me."

Some months passed away. There seemed to be a coolness between the Walgraves and the Russells. Walgrave was beginning to look unhappy once more. Miss Hogg made him a visit and noticed that something was wrong. "Now, my friend," she said in her frank, honest manner, "what has happened to make you sad? Things don't seem right at Russell farm either. Be frank with me and tell me; I have my suspicions already."

"Well, Mrs. Russell, I 'm a fool, that 's all; I have learned to care very much for your cousin Mary, and I suppose that I have somehow betrayed myself, and she is no longer the same with us as she used to be; she never comes here now and Isabelle is quite unhappy about it, and so am I, Mrs. Russell."

"But how did all this come about?" asked Miss Hogg, now Mrs. Russell, though it will be best to continue to call her Miss Hogg so as not to get mixed.

"Well, it dates three months back, when John and Isabelle were discussing Mary and the offer of marriage she had received from Mr. Godfrey, and her refusal of it. It gave me a shock and opened my eyes to the fact that I should miss her greatly; and from that time I have felt embarrassed in her presence and there seems to be a coolness between us; it is all my fault."

"Yes," replied Miss Hogg, "it is indeed your fault. Did it never occur to you that Mary might care for you a little? Mind, she has not told me; not a word has passed between us concerning you." But Miss Hogg did not tell Walgrave that Katy had told her how matters stood, and that if Walgrave continued to believe that Mary was

offended with him Mary was in a false position, and she had made up her mind to set things right.

"O, Mamie," he said, "if it were only possible!"

"Everything is possible," she replied; "and if I have made a mistake about Mary it will be best for you to know how matters stand between you two. And here 's a chance for you. Do you see Mary and Isabelle just passing the gate? She will not come in, but she does not know that I 'm here. Come along with me; we will meet them; you will be supposed to be taking her home." And they left the house just as Isabelle was kissing Mary good-by.

"Wait a moment, Mary;" called Mamie; "I 'm coming with you;" and Mary had to wait. They all walked together for some time; then Miss Hogg paired off with Isabelle, who had much to say to her; and so Mary and Walgrave had to walk together. Mary tried hard to keep up a conversation with him, but he seemed to be preoccupied. Then he said suddenly, as though he had made up his mind, "Are you offended with me, Miss Russell?"

"No, Mr. Walgrave; how could I be? You have always been kind and considerate to all of us. Why should you think so?"

"O, Miss Russell, if you knew what is passing in my mind you would never forgive me."

Mary's cheeks were very rosy; she felt that something was coming, but she did not answer; her silence gave Walgrave courage, and, placing her hand on his arm, he led her to the old seat under the apple tree where Mrs. Hogg had sat that evening when Mamie met her cousin Tom for the first time; and there Walgrave had an explanation with Mary, which seemed to have terminated to the satisfaction of both; for half an hour later they walked to the house arm in arm and looking as happy as could be. The old people were pleased, but not surprised. When Isabelle was told she kissed and hugged Mary, saying, "You dear little mamma, now we shall have you all the time." Mary blushed and returned Isabelle's kisses. Walgrave was pleased to see that his choice added to Isabelle's happiness.

Six months later Mary and Walgrave were married in the village church, quite *en famille*. Mrs. Hogg, Mamie, and her husband came to the wedding.

Mary was peacefully happy; she had married the man she loved and respected, and Walgrave was the man to make any woman happy. His home became a little paradise of contentment, and as the years went by and little boys and girls called him papa, he forgot his sorrows of long ago. He still corresponded with Mathew, who never tired of asking about Miss Hogg, as he still called her, though she has now a fine family of little Russells. Her mother and father still live, and so do the elder Russells, but they are growing feeble. Julia has married Mr. Godfrey. They are well suited to each other. John and Isabelle are engaged and expect to be married in another year. Isabelle is eighteen years old.

A letter has just arrived from Lady Montgomery announcing Lady Florence's marriage to Lord Montgomery; so that her ladyship has not been disappointed after all. Mamie laughed as she read her letter. She cannot forget all the tricks she and Katy played long ago. She is still merry and full of fun, and so is Tom, who has never had any cause to regret his choice. He is now one of the best lawyers in New York, and he still lives in Clinton avenue, Brooklyn. He went once to England with his wife and paid a visit to Lady Montgomery and Lady Florence, Lord Montgomery being in Paris at the time. Mamie was glad she did not meet him.

Lady Montgomery said to Mamie, "My dear Mrs. Russell, you have a right to be proud of your husband; he is a perfect gentleman and a handsome one."

Lady Florence was pleased to see them both, and has always kept up a correspondence with Mamie. She sent her portrait to Isabelle, received hers in return, and thought it so beautiful that she asked her aunt if it was possible for anyone to be so lovely; her aunt replied smilingly, "Look in your own looking-glass, my dear."

The Jerrys are still with Mr. Walgrave. Widow Jerry lives now with Katy and her husband, quite contented. Katy has five children so far, but, as Jerry says, the more the merrier when you have plenty to give them.

Of course the farm was transferred to Walgrave by Miss Hogg's orders. She had also returned his precious Bible, the old detective book, and it gave him great pleasure to get it back again, for he certainly believed

it to be at the bottom of the sea; and they both laughed at the recollection of those times. They were all happy now so that the sight of it could not bring back sad memories. When Mary was told about it she joined heartily in the laughter.

Jack, the shoeblack and detective, became in due time a great detective in London; and he declares that during all his experience he never had a case to compare with that of Miss Hogg, the clever American heiress.

THE END.

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